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Happy returns, NAB

The National Advisory Body celebrated the anniversary of the first meeting of its committee this week. Officially, therefore, it is a third of the way through its three-year term. But as the qualification "interim" disappeared almost immediately from the NAB's title, it will probably be around for much longer than that. Indeed the NAB will probably survive in approximately its present form until it moves into much closer association, if not outright amalgamation, with the University Grants Committee - which is another way of saying a very long time.

Despite the likely longevity of the NAB, its first birthday does offer an opportunity or a pretext to review its record so far. The first and perhaps most important thing to be said in the NAB's favour is that it has turned out to be a much more decisive body than anyone imagined a year ago. After all, the common expectation was that it was such a prisoner of compromise that it would be incapable of swift action, that it was such a prisoner of special interests (ie "them") that it would be unable to make clear and good decisions, and that the absence of adequate representation of academic interests (ie "us") would make any decisions that the NAB did take unusual and ineffective.

None of these criticisms have turned out to have much substance. The NAB has been shown to embody a skilful compromise at interests which has obliged both the Department of Education and Science and the local authorities to come to terms with issues which previously they had ignored. The "special interests" have found themselves as much the prisoners as the jailers of the NAB. Finally the body has devised procedures to give weight to academic judgments that seem to be half-way acceptable.

The result is that the NAB has enjoyed unexpected successes during its first 12 months. It has effectively taken over the machinery of course approvals, including the most immediately urgent issue of under-subscribed courses. This was a calculated risk because it could very easily have led to headlines about "NAB hit-lists". In fact careful handling of this difficult issue has placed greater emphasis on the NAB's success in persuading the DES to lift its moratorium on approving any new courses, and its medium-term intention of replacing course-by-course approval with a broader (and theoretically more liberal) system of programme scrutiny.

The NAB has also moved quickly to dominate the central policy area of the determination and allocation of the advanced further education pool. Again, with reasonable success. It has managed to avoid over-identification with the cuts: begun to lack-

le the explosive question of uneven unit costs (although not fast enough for some in low-cost institutions who believe that a bigger stick should have been taken to high-cost ones); and launched a planning exercise which is more open and more organized than any previously attempted in the non-university sector.

So the NAB has had a good first year. Mr Ball and his colleagues on the committee, and indeed, the NAB's officers should be given proper credit for their work. For there was never any chance of a honeymoon. The controversial origins of the NAB and the sharp contraction of higher education on which the Government has continued to insist made that impossible. Instead of enjoying a honeymoon, it has had to lay old and troublesome ghosts (if such a mixed metaphor can be allowed). In retrospect one of the most significant early successes of the NAB may be to have shifted the territory and policy and debate away from the aid fund of models A versus B: local authorities versus their polytechnics.

If there must be any criticism of the NAB's performance so far, it is probably that it has tried too hard. For example, it is still not clear why so early in its life and pressed by many urgent problems the NAB should have got embroiled in the tricky issue of two-year degrees/diplomas.

Even if the balance of British higher education could be shifted from three to two-year courses it would take ten years: the NAB must produce a defensible strategy for the polytechnics and colleges in as many months. It still seems a strange diversion, politically hazardous when there was no pressing necessity and defensible only perhaps in terms of long-term consciousness raising (to divert attention from short-term cuts) - but that would be much too cynical.

However, the main question mark must be over the NAB's present planning exercise. The intention is to get each institution, local authority, and (possibly) regional advisory council to establish their own priorities, and then for the NAB to sort them all out and come up with a national plan. This would then become the basis of the allocation of courses and also for the approval of courses and programmes of work within institutions.

The drawbacks are many and obvious. Many institutions and local authorities will fail to establish priorities, either because they will not or because they cannot. Some local authorities will jump the gun and do silly, or vindictive things. The NAB will be forced to make arbitrary decisions (to close the four or five most vulnerable colleges of higher education, or to squeeze the high-cost polytechnics harder?) which may

sit uneasily with the apparent elaboration of the preceding planning exercise. At some stage considerations of quality are going to get thrown out of the window, to be replaced by those of politics.

Even if it all comes off, the NAB is going to be the uneasy possessor of a power over the non-university sector which many institutions and local authorities are going to resent. It will be a power far more direct and detailed than the influence exercised over the universities by the UGC. If a polytechnic or college deviates at all from the blueprint that the NAB has drawn up for it, it can be whipped back into line by the application of the course approval system. At least in theory, no one will have the power to second guess the judgment of the NAB.

Yet to write on these terms may be to mistake the true importance of the planning exercise. Although the NAB has already set unexpectedly high standards of administrative openness and competence, it would be wrong to judge the present exercise simply in terms of managerial efficiency. For it is inevitable that at the institutional grassroots many of the NAB's preoccupations will appear "necrotic" in a pejorative sense. Of course it is impossible to devise in little more than a year a plan for the non-university half of higher education that combines feasibility and academic coherence. Inevitably detailed local constraints are going to have as much influence as any NAB grand scheme.

But the work of the NAB should be judged in broader terms. The planning exercise can be regarded as part of the long-term education of the polytechnics and colleges because it will help to make all those who work in their conscious of the problems and opportunities facing the sector. But if the NAB is engaged in psychological as much as physical planning, the tone of its formal decisions and less formal pronouncements is especially important. Secondly, whatever the immediate outcome, academic and financial planning will have been brought closer than ever before in this sector. In the long run that must be a benefit. Finally, the external political dimensions can hardly be ignored. If the NAB approach convinces the DES that the polytechnics and colleges are now subject to purposeful national planning, they are likely to be treated less harshly and arbitrarily in future.

So perhaps it is not wrong to wish the infant NAB many happy returns on its first birthday. At the start of what must inevitably be a very difficult second year, the decision of the voluntary colleges to come aboard is a welcome and significant vote of confidence - one which on the record so far is deserved.

Called to account

The first concerns the correlation between student numbers and quality. There is a good case, loudly championed in some of the universities cut most heavily by the UGC, that staff/student ratios could be stretched somewhat without endangering standards. This, after all, is what has happened in the public sector without noticeable ill-effects: indeed, the institutions have been congratulated by Mr William Waldegrave for their actions. It would not be necessary to make a fundamental move towards staffing levels accepted in other countries for some universities to follow suit.

Sir Edward Parkes appeared to have conceded the point when he told the Select Committee on Education that sanctions would be applied only if the UGC believed high admissions were causing reduced

standards. Unfortunately, however, the present system does not permit such flexibility. The combination of grants and fees which the UGC is obliged to employ drastically reduces the leverage available on student numbers. Quite apart from the effect on student grants, the committee has to remember that each extra home student means £480 less to be distributed elsewhere.

When the Government is calling for more variety among the universities and maximum value for money, by halving home fees last year and freezing them this, ministers have already begged the question of why they should not be abolished. It would make the job of the UGC simpler and more efficient if the trend was taken to its logical conclusion.

Laurie Taylor



Department of Theology
February 4
Anno Domini 1983

My dear Vice-Chancellor,
Re: Information technology and new blood appointments
Thank you so much for your recent circular letter referring to the above matters.

First, may I turn to new blood? As you will know the average age in this department is now 63.7. It is only fair to point out the Reverend Doctor Fleecingham is still only 57, while matters are seriously unbalanced - I speak statistically - by the occasional part-time presence in the Department of Professor Lambing (74). But overall, I believe our case to be self-evident.

If our bid for a new blood appointment were successful, then we would envisage the successful applicant contributing primarily to the compulsory course on Eschatology. This, as you will recall, has been under some pressure in recent years, largely as a result of our decision to extend it to a three-term course after a Departmental Meeting in 1979 drew up what we believed to be a more comprehensive list of Last Things than had previously been compassed by the syllabus.

We could also do with a little new blood on the Problem of Evil (third year option course, although there is now less urgency about additional teaching on first-year Old Testament Catechism following the return of Doctor Penstock from his three-year sabbatical period in Nevada).

I should also mention that I have received a request from Doctor Ramussen for at least some new blood on his Transubstantiation Option - but quite frankly - and I hope you'll treat this remark in confidence - I'm very loath to do anything whatsoever to help Doctor Ramussen toward his quite unfavourable behaviour toward recalcitrant students on the Doctrine of Atonement course.

May I now turn - I confess, with a certain amount of eagerness - to the references in your circular to "priority being accorded to those departments which were able to show evidence of current involvement in information technology". And it is here that I wish to refer to Doctor Shearing.

Although Doctor Shearing has been primarily responsible in the last four decades for the compulsory part of our much-admired Why Wrote St Paul's Epistles? course, he has increasingly taken on an interest in audio-visual material.

Last week, however, there was a further development. Several of us accepted an invitation to Doctor Shearing's home, where he displayed for us his new Baird Video-Cassette Recorder (VCR). It was a most stimulating occasion and there were few who failed to admire his remarkable dexterity in the manipulation of such features as Rewind-Eject and even (by way of an encore) Freeze Frame. It was a moment when the succinct reference in your circular to the need "for the academic community to engage in a fundamental re-orientation which allows it to come to terms with the major developments in information technology" came vividly to mind.

These are, as you also say in your letter, "challenging times". We, in the department of theology are ready to face them.

Let us hope that in future we may all, in the moving words of Doctor Shearing "set our personal buttons to Fast-Forward".

Yours in Our Ultimate Concern
S. EWANK (Rev) (Prof).

The Times Higher Education Supplement

February 11, 1983 No 536 Price 45p

How private enterprise is forging new links with universities

Big firms 'turned off' by tax law

by Sandra Hempel
The development of a new sector of "industrial universities" will be encouraged if the present Government continues in office.
Although ministers have no precise model in mind, these new institutions would have two main characteristics:
① They would be directly attached to particular industries;
② They would be paid for wholly or largely with private money, rather than the Crunfield Institute of Technology today receives more than half its income from private sources.

The present idea is that some existing universities or polytechnics might be eager to move in this direction and would put their own plans far closer links with industry and less dependence on the state.

Mr William Waldegrave, MP under-secretary for higher education, told a conference in London this week that he did not rule out the idea of institutions having "a new and different relationship with industry", or of some high-grade specialist institutions being attached to particular industries.

The Government was prepared to consider any package which a university or polytechnic might put forward regardless of how radical or controversial it might be.
"This Government is showing itself willing to alarm the educational lobby by a good deal with moves such as the Manpower Services Commission's directly funded schemes," Mr Waldegrave said.

American tax laws were changed in 1981 to allow half the profit margin on equipment against tax as well as the cost price. In Britain, only cost was allowed. "This represents a substantial disincentive to make donations in Britain," Mr Baldwin said.

The company argues that giving engineering departments the latest computing equipment helps improve the quality of teaching. Students trained on outmoded equipment are less valuable to high-technology industry after graduation.

Mr Baldwin wrote in the company's 1982 British annual report: "Hewlett-Packard is well satisfied at the high standard of graduates from British universities. But there must be doubts about the maintenance of both quality and quantity in future as the educational system struggles to keep pace with the rapid growth of high-technology industry."

Other obstacles to donation stemming from British tax law include tight definitions of the use to be made of the equipment. But Hewlett-Packard is unusual as the British company is closely tied to its American parent and the budget for donations is controlled from the United States.

Other British computer companies generally have more autonomy in this field, although most agree that more generous tax concessions would encourage them to give away more equipment to universities.

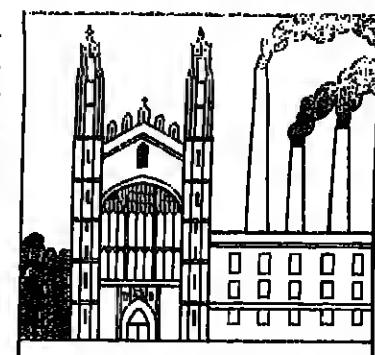
Mr Marcus Palliser, of Digital Equipment, said that the company made donations of equipment and education had been given priority in the last few years. But the British gifts were decided independently of the parent company.

Other companies, such as IBM, prefer to assist educational institutions by making cash grants or setting up cooperative research programmes.

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It was up to institutions to come forward with a model rather than just "a gleam in the eye".
"One of the things we have done that has given the greatest push to institutions is also one of the crudest things we have done, which is to limit resources. Suddenly the industrialist's pound is worth more now than it used to be."

Condemning what he called "me-tooism" in higher education, Mr Waldegrave said that pluralism must be increased among institutions. This had diminished over the years as institutions tended to become "subordinate to that computer in Cheltenham".

He praised the science park at Trinity College, Cambridge, but said the problem now was that every institution felt it had to have a science park. "Every time I visit an institution I am told, 'You must see our science park, and there is an empty nissen hut.'"

The Government wanted to ensure that any institutional barriers such as legal blocks were broken down in order to help the changing ethos of higher education.

The DES informed the Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit, which funds the magazine, of the complaints shortly before the unit's management committee was due to consider renewing *Write First Time's* £25,000 grant for the next two years.

The committee decided to postpone a decision on its future until the end of this week. It considered seeking assurances from the magazine's organizing committee about additional fundraising efforts.

Write First Time has been directly funded by ALBSU and its predecessors since 1975, but because it is a national project the final decision lies with the DES.

The DES said the Minister would wait for the management committee's decision before considering the magazine's future. The theme of the complaints was not views expressed in the magazine, but the use of public funds to produce it.

Although the collective organizes production, each issue of *Write First Time* is written and put together by students and tutors from a different area. The November issue came from Birmingham. About 7,000 copies are distributed at 10 pence each - a heavy subsidy since the cost price would exceed 50 pence. But almost two-thirds of the grant funds creative writing development workers, not the magazine.

benefit themselves but whose study and experience here will be of advantage to this country". Additional awards will also be provided under the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan and the Overseas Development Administration's technical cooperation.

Discussions have already started with the Hongkong government on proposals it made for a shared funding scheme to make up the balance

of the SERC, said this week the council was very concerned about the cost of maintaining the subscriptions. Room for manoeuvre was very limited as most of the budget was already committed. Short of pious measures to reduce expenditure on research grants in universities, the council would have to look again at plans for expansion in selected areas.

The SERC made successful bids for extra funds to promote information technology and space research last year, the same amount now needed to

meet its European commitments. "If we have to cut our budgets to make up this shortfall, this vitiates the extra money we have been allocated in the science budget," said Professor Kingman.

The council wants to see a change in the funding of these international projects. One possible solution would be to take this part of the budget out of the cash limit system, as some Foreign Office subscriptions paid overseas. But the Treasury has so far resisted this.

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between home and overseas fees for eligible Hongkong university and polytechnic students. Similar arrangements would be considered for other dependent territories.

Unspecified provision is also to be made for Cyprus because of its special claims for preferential treatment and for Malaysia, as traditionally the sender of the largest number of students to Britain.

continued on page 3

of the SERC,

Deadlock in redundancy talks

by David Jobbins

Union negotiators have reached deadlock with local authorities in negotiations over redundancy compensation and procedures.

Now the executive of the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education is to consider how best to apply pressure to individual local authorities rather than persisting with negotiations within the national joint council on conditions of service.

When the NCTF-heralded by Naffie as the model for free collective bargaining arrangements on both salaries and conditions - met last week the employers were not prepared to meet union demands on the status of the one year's notice of redundancy recommendations.

Nor would they join with the unions in an appeal to ministers for better treatment for lecturers who may lose their jobs either in the

current round of teacher education course closures or in any structural adjustments flowing from the planning exercise undertaken by the National Advisory Body on public sector higher education.

The employers argued that they were legally prevented from improving on the compensation terms announced by Sir Keith Joseph, Secretary of State for Education, late last year, and that there was no case for lecturers being treated more favourably than other groups of local government workers.

Union negotiators feel that, because the pool of staff aged 50 or more and eligible for premature retirement compensation is fast drying up, the Government scheme is unlikely to attract takers.

They also regard it as vastly inferior to the terms offered to university academics. Previous contractors in the teacher education service

have been eased by the availability of generous Crombie compensation terms, now effectively blocked by the Government.

"This is nothing more than a totally inadequate compensation for people who are going to be summarily sacked," a senior official said.

Naffie is also worried at some implications of the scheme's discretionary nature. One fear is that employers locally may be wary of making use of it because of the effect on other groups of employees.

But progress was made in some key areas - essentially a commitment to national discussions on an agreement on dismissals, suspensions and disciplinary codes.

Advances were also made on the guidance to be issued at national level on the application of the threshold for qualification for assistant lecturer status to part-time staff with heavy administrative loads.

Authorities refuse to rock the college boat

by Felicity Jones

The Council of Local Education Authorities' decision to wash its hands of nautical education course closures could mean an end to half the country's maritime education centres.

The decision will now be left to the National Advisory Body, which is planning the future of public sector higher education. It is likely to retain only four or five centres in Plymouth, Liverpool, South Shields and Southampton.

The CLEA accepted the Merchant Navy Training Board position that there were too many courses for too few students and agreed some courses would have to close. Two years ago the navy took in 500 cadets and next year this will fall to 90.

Education authorities which house the 11 centres for advanced nautical education were asked to suggest their own cuts. But only half responded with proposals to reduce student numbers. The rest could see no need for reductions in their area.

The lost opportunity for self-regulation means that the NAB will probably act swiftly to reduce the centres to the main geographic regions.

This outcome has been sharply criticized by the Association of Navigation Colleges which fears that

the delicate balance between advanced and non-advanced, engineering, off-shore and fishing maritime education will be undermined.

The secretary of the association, Captain David Robinson, said that the NAB's scuppering exercise could undo three centuries of maritime education in one swoop. The future, looked bleak as no "young blood" was coming in and 40 per cent of the 375 lecturers were 52 years old and above, he added.

"Control government seems to forget that this is a maritime nation and 400 cadets should be trained a year, not 90," he said.

"There is a real danger that nautical education will die from the roots upwards because it takes 12 years to train a ship's master and the expertise is fast dying out."

The five largest centres for advanced training for ship's mates and captains are the ones in Southampton, South Shields, Plymouth, Liverpool and Fleetwood not counting the three in Scotland. The smaller centres include Humber College of Higher Education, City of London Polytechnic, Lowestoft College of Further Education, Brunel Technical College, Bristol, Glamorgan Institute of Higher Education and Ulster Polytechnic.

Engineering Council wins big vote of confidence

Chartered engineers have shown their confidence in the new Engineering Council with a clear vote in favour of transferring the registration functions of the Council of Engineering Institutions to the younger body.

More than 82,000 of the 200,000 chartered engineers returned postal ballot forms in the poll, which closed on Monday, and 92.9 per cent of those voting were in favour of the transfer. This is well above the two-thirds majority required in the CEI's charter, and followed the recommendation of the CEI board and most of the major engineering institutions that engineers should approve the new arrangements.

The Engineering Council, set up to enhance the status of the profession and improve engineering practice along the lines suggested in the Finniston report, will now take over the register of engineers and the granting of the title CEng before the autumn deadline set in its own royal charter. The final move will be ratified by the Privy Council later this year.

The ballot marks the end of prolonged negotiations between the two bodies, and of fears that independent members of the CEI might block a transfer of powers. When the result was given on Tuesday, the CEI also announced that it will take steps to pass over its other functions, and to wind itself up before the end of the year.

The engineering assembly will be elected by chartered and non-chartered engineers in regional constituencies. It will meet at least once a year to question the members and staff of the council on their annual report. Dr Miller said this would be a useful way for the council to keep in close touch with opinion in the profession.

Fewer go to university

The number of students gaining university places through the Universities Central Council on Admissions dropped by 3.2 per cent last year compared with 1981, while applications rose by 2.6 per cent. The figures conceal a drop in overseas applications of 16.6 per cent.

The latest statistics from the UCCA show that a total of 171,495 students applied in 1982, compared with 167,096 the previous year. They comprised 156,675 home candidates (149,530 in 1981) and 14,821 (17,566) overseas applicants. Women applicants accounted for 40.8 per cent of the total last year compared with 39.9 per cent in 1981.

The total number of successful candidates went down from 80,341 to 77,732, consisting of 72,634 home students (74,514 in 1981) and 5,118 overseas (5,327 the previous year).

Women were only slightly more successful last year than in 1981. They accounted for 40.8 per cent of all successful candidates in 1982 compared with 40.4 per cent in 1981. Last year 20,829 students were

admitted to science courses; both through and outside the UCCA scheme, while 18,886 were admitted to social, administration and business studies; 11,870 to engineering and technology; and 16,819 to arts courses. Within these groups most students took law, mathematics and English - 3,426; 3,133 and 2,882 respectively.

Medicine, dentistry and health took 6,548 students in 1982; education 1,064; agriculture, forestry and veterinary science took 1,409; and architecture and other professional and vocational subjects such as town planning and hotel management had an intake of 1,400.

Of the 15,797 students considered for the clearing system, 6,973 were not referred to a university, while 5,123 were referred but not accepted. A total of 6,189 students found places through clearing last year.

UCCA Annual Report 1981/82: p.125 from UCCA, PO Box 28, Cheltenham, Glos.

Scotland to have all graduate teachers

by Olga Wojtas

Scottish Correspondent

Scotland is to have an all graduate teaching profession, Mr George Younger, Secretary of State for Scotland, has announced.

A four year primary degree course will replace the present three year diploma in 1984 and there are to be improvements in the one year post-graduate courses for primary and secondary teachers.

The education colleges, unions, and the General Teaching Council for Scotland has been pressing for an all graduate profession for many years, and the decision has undoubtedly been precipitated by moves last autumn south of the border which would bar some Scottish diplomats from teaching in England and Wales.

Mr Alex Fletcher under secretary of state for Scotland denied this reason, however, saying a consultation paper had been issued in 1980 while the decision was being made to close colleges and get a bit lost because of the natural concern about closures.

The three closures had undoubtedly helped fund the extra year's training which Scottish Office officials estimate will add "a few hundred thousand pounds" to the £25m education budget, said Mr Fletcher.

But the Government proposals would also cut costs by substantially increasing the number of primary teachers taking the one year post-graduate course, with only 55 per cent taking the new four year course.

Mr Fred Forrester, organizing secretary of the Educational Institute of Scotland, said the union had re-

servations. He said: "We'd like to hear the rationale behind it. It allows for fine tuning in the supply of teachers, but this ought to be planned over some year, not by turning the tap on and off at the last minute."

The Scottish Secretary is to set up a working party of the college principals, the GTC, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, teaching unions and the Scottish Education Department to prepare guidelines for the new degree by June.

All the new courses would be externally validated.

Mr Gordon Kirk, principal of Moray House college of education, said his college would seek validation from the Council for National Academic Awards. "Accountability is a very powerful instrument for staff development, but the universi-

ties have virtually no experience of the kind of degree we should be preparing", he said.

The secondary BED degree is to be axed. The SED admitting this is for financial rather than educational reasons since there would be only 75 graduates this session.

Mr Kirk said the BED had been very successful but its axing would be accepted as part of the trade off for the primary degree.

However, he added that a call from the Scottish Secretary to examine rationalizing the one year secondary postgraduate course was "potentially explosive". At present the colleges providing secondary courses are trying to maintain a full range of subjects, and with SED cuts in secondary intake, rationalization could imply further college closures.

Wedderburn accuses colleagues of takeover

by Sandra Hempel

Professor Dorothy Wedderburn, principal of Bedford College, has accused other colleges within the University of London of trying to take over some of the departments with the backing of many of her staff.

Bedford College is merging with Royal Holloway and moving from its present site to Regent's Park site at Egham in Surrey.

The subject working parties set up to protect academic excellence within the universities in the face of the mergers and moves now going on felt "sadly like an exercise in asset-stripping", Professor Wedderburn told Bedford's governors at their recent annual general meeting.

"King's would like our philosophy department and University College Holford and Dutch", she said. "The argument is that these must be located to the centre."

"Frequently I and the faculties take ourselves in conflict with our colleagues."

Professor Wedderburn's view was still sub judice.

that Bedford had negotiated with Royal Holloway in good faith and, while it was realised that some marginal moves might be appropriate, the mix of departments made academic sense.

The argument about the remoteness of Egham and its effect on intercollegiate teaching was specious and the new RHC/Bedford would need to fight to expand because it would still be the smallest unit within the university and therefore vulnerable to any further cuts.

An argument is also going on over the location of Bedford's geology department. This is to merge with some of King's and Chelsea colleges while these institutions want to go to Chelsea's King's Road site, Professor Wedderburn said.

Neither University College nor King's College would comment on Professor Wedderburn's accusations. A spokesman for UC said it would not comment on a matter which was still sub judice.

New FE training proposed

by Patricia Santinelli

A coherent system of initial training for serving further education teachers leading where possible to a qualification was recommended this week by the Government's advisory body on teacher training.

The Advisory Committee for the Supply and Education of Teachers has told the Secretary of State for Education that the absence of a statutory requirement for further education teachers to hold a qualification has led to "tens of thousands" of teachers in further and higher education not undergoing any professional training.

According to figures published in its advice only 25 per cent of the 17,000 full time teachers in polytechnics in 1981 had completed a recognized course of professional training. In other major establishments only 51 per cent of the 61,175 full time teachers had been trained.

Moreover, many staff now beginning their career of further education teaching still did so without pre-service training. By 1981 only half of all new teachers in polytechnics and other establishments had received such training.

ASCT wants the system to serve all teachers, whether employed full

time or part time and whether their work is vocational or non-vocational, further educational or general adult education. It considers professional training should lead to the award of a Certificate in Education (FE) for those who are able to pursue their studies to this level.

The committee believes that the current schemes of initial in-service training known as Haycocks I and II should be rationalized and a common curriculum introduced which would also take in other training courses run by City and Guilds.

It recommends that the Department of Education and Science should exploit through the Regional Advisory Councils and interested voluntary bodies, prospects for developing existing and planned future provision for initial training for serving part time and full time teachers in order to provide a system of training to certificate level.

A full-time diploma course for teachers in the principles and practice of industry and commerce launched this week at St. Mary's College, Twickenham was described as breaking new ground by Mr John MacGregor, under secretary of state for industry.

Help for student entrepreneurs

Forty potential entrepreneurs among final year Scottish university students will be helped to set up their businesses in a venture launched from Stirling University.

The Scottish Enterprise Foundation was formed at Stirling last November, sponsored by both the public and private sector. One of its first initiatives is the Graduate Enterprise Scheme launched in a series of one-day conferences at each of the eight Scottish universities.

All graduating students will be asked to fill in a questionnaire to submit

ideas for a business which will be reviewed by a local panel of university staff, professional firms and business people. Each university has appointed an enterprise counsellor to give expert advice.

In June a national panel chaired by Sir Monty Finniston will select 40 of the most viable ideas. The successful students will then undergo an 18-week training and development programme backed by an enterprise allowance, a market research grant, a general grant, office facilities and free tuition, valued at £5,000.

Students who are successful will be asked to fill in a questionnaire to submit

UGC at a dangerous age . . .

by David Jobbins

The University Grants Committee may reconsider its decision to apply an upper age limit of 35 on applicants for the 300 "new blood" posts after a warning that it could be in breach of the Sex Discrimination Act.

The act outlaws indirect discrimination - the imposition of requirements which women find more difficult to comply with than men. And the Association of University Teachers, which is raising the issue with the UGC, says that a smaller proportion of female academics will be able to comply with the 35-year age bar than men.

Mr John Akker, the AUT deputy general secretary said: "It discriminates against women who have stopped work in their late 20s and 30s to raise kids and will not be able to return to work until their children have reached school age."

The Equal Opportunities Commission is also concerned about his aspect of the scheme. It said: "We have always been against age bars."

In 1978 the Employment Appeal Tribunal ruled that the requirement by the Civil Service of a maximum age of 28 for appointment to the executive officer grade was unlawful indirect discrimination because in practice fewer women than men could comply with it.

"We feel the cases are very similar in content," Mr Akker said. The EEC confirmed it might also be unlawful to advertise posts to which an age bar was attached, but added that the issue could not be tested until an individual took a case to an industrial tribunal.

Vice chancellors have until the end of next week to lodge claims for the new posts, which are unlikely to be advertised before Easter, although



An automated memory trainer to help neurology patients suffering memory loss, pictured here with the Southampton University Electronics Department team which designed it. It was among prize-winning entries in a Design Council engineering award.

All seven prizewinning projects in the 1983 Molins Design Prize came from university or polytechnic departments, including Bath, Cambridge and Loughborough universities and Plymouth and Stirling.

Thatcher college condemns loans

Students at Mrs Thatcher's old college have told her of their opposition to Government plans to introduce student loans.

A statement prepared by the junior common room at Somerville College, Oxford, and presented to the Prime Minister on her visit last weekend, attacks proposals for a mixed loans and grants scheme.

"We believe this marks a step back towards the idea that education is a privilege, enjoyed mainly by those who can afford it, not a right to be enjoyed by all. Restricted access to higher education is not only a waste of society's precious resources but also demeans the principle that education is valuable for its own sake."

The students believe the scheme would not have the Government's effect of reducing spending on student support and would restrict access by children of poorer families, women and mature students.

Ministers have yet to win Cabinet approval for their plans.

Overseas fees

continued from page 1

The final element of the scheme will provide "some limited additional provision" for the British Council to attract fee-paying students and to strengthen academic links.

Mr Pym added that it was hoped that the Overseas Research Students Award Scheme, which caters for outstanding postgraduate researchers, would be broadened and the full quota of awards taken up. The scheme is likely to be extended to the public sector and to take in all postgraduates from abroad.

Mr Pym told MPs the Government believed it right to encourage students from abroad. "They have concluded that it is in the national interest, both in the short term and in the longer term, to provide more help to enable overseas students to come to this country

Applications for places at polytechnics have increased on last year's record with some polytechnics reporting a 100 per cent greater response rate.

Contrary to national strategy, qualified applicants have maintained their desire for three year degree courses.

It looks as if nationwide the applications have increased by 40 per cent on last year's figure which in itself was 30 to 40 per cent higher than the year before. Some, like City of London Polytechnic, report already a 100 per cent increase by the end of December compared to the same period last year. Individual courses are doing even better with a 120 per cent increase in the poly BA business studies.

City thinks students are being advised to submit their applications to polytechnics at the same time as to the University's Central Council on Admissions' deadline. It also thinks there is greater awareness of the public sector, a pool of unsuccessful applicants from last year and an increase in multiple applications.

Dr Rickett said the polytechnic had saved the authorities thousands of pounds by making accommodation available to house Edmondson and Hendon colleges of further education, provide computer links with schools, business and free courses for the unemployed. Cuts in staffing, supplies and maintenance have already been made.

giving only a third of the amount proposed by the OST. He claimed that financial support for foreign students would drop next year unless the whole scheme was operational. "Even though half a loaf may be better than none, it is debatable whether a quarter of a loaf will provide the encouragement to overseas students the Government is seeking to give," he said.

Sir Keith Joseph, Secretary of State for Education told the Commons Select Committee on Education, Science and the Arts that the contribution from the education budget to the £46m announced by Mr Pym to encourage overseas students would be "marginal". He hoped the Government could give advice on the residential status of overseas students following the decision in as short a time as possible but there was no firm data yet.

Mr Chris Prie, the chairman of the committee said that local authorities were under "dire financial uncertainty"

Mr Neil Kinnock and Mr Philip Whitehead, the Opposition education spokesmen, said that the statement was a betrayal of the overseas students and the country's long-term interests. Labour would expand student sponsorship through the ODA on grounds of origin, income level and availability of courses in Britain and elsewhere.

However, Mrs Shirley Williams, president of the Social Democratic Party, accused Labour of hypocrisy over the issue. She told the 77123 that she had proposed a £100m scheme in 1978 but found no support.

Student organizations and aid agencies were also critical of the new measures. Mr Rupert Bristow, executive secretary of the United Kingdom Council for Overseas Student Affairs, pointed out that the Government was

Cambridge's display of animal vigour cancels out 'cancer'



Mr Stewart: difficult task

by David Jobbins

Charges that Oxford represents a cancer within the education system were emphatically dismissed this week by the Cambridge Union.

This led Mr Neil Stewart, president of the National Union of Students, and leader of the attack on the privileged to half joke afterwards: "The result only goes to show how much the admissions system has to be improved."

One of the largest meetings in recent years rejected the proposition lifted from early drafts of Labour's post-18 education policy - by a decisive 288 votes to 153.

Mr Stewart, who admitted he was more at home with a three-minute rant at a student general meeting than with the urbane and extended style of union debates, recognized from the outset that his task of convincing the essentially conservative union to endorse the indictment was

near impossible.

But the choice of motion was not his and he faced formidable opposition in the shape of Sir Peter Swinerton-Dyer, master of St Catherine's and two years ago vice-chancellor of the university. Sir Peter suggested he had displayed the "animal vigour" of his ancestors surging down the steps of Culoden to defend a lost and out-dated cause.

Mr Stewart pointed out that Labour had distanced itself from the "cancer" analogy but he attributed its appearance in the document squarely to Mr Charles Clarke, a past president of the student union at Cambridge and now advisor to Mr Neil Kinnock, Labour's education spokesman.

He warned students that unless Oxford - described by one speaker as a system of elitism unparalleled since the days of the Prussian Junkers - reformed itself, it would be reformed

from the outside. Reforms were being made but was a 0.6 per cent increase in the representation of state schools significant?

The real debate was not about how the system could cater for white mule 18-year-olds, or whether entrance should be determined by a level or the universities' own examination, but how access could be widened.

Sir Peter endorsed earlier speakers who had blamed any imbalance in Oxfordshire entry on the deficiencies of the state school system.

"In the long run I believe the results of the state school system will be good but in its present highly imperfect state it is not giving brighter children nearly as good teaching as they used to 30 years ago."



Sir Peter: blamed state schools

He placed a large portion of the blame for Oxford's inability to reform itself on Sir Harold Wilson, who turned down requests for a Royal Commission.

Windfall for small-scale physics

by Jon Turney
Science Correspondent

The Science and Engineering Research Council is prepared to double the value of grants for small-scale physics research, provided enough good projects can be found.

The council's physics committee, which supports the work of researchers not studying in the expensive "high science" areas of particle physics, nuclear structure and astronomy, has an extra £1m to spend this year. But it must all be allocated to projects put forward by April 1.

The council gave news of this windfall to members of the standing conference of professors of physics

at the University of Oxford. The extra money follows a call for more support in a report by Professor Jo Vinen of Birmingham University, the chairman of the physics committee until last summer. He said this week the decision showed the SERC was firmly convinced that basic physics was an important discipline which deserved stronger support.

Physicists at the meeting were told that no particular areas in their discipline were being singled out at the moment, and the distribution of the money would depend on the quality of applications received. But the SERC also wants to develop a policy for promoting specific projects, some with industrial applications, especially in information technology.

The physics committee, which makes recommendations to the SERC science board, turned away last week's high quality grant applications should be, but the budget increase is large enough to enter for an increase in the total of applications from university and polytechnic physics departments.

Youth extension

The Government has extended the consultation period for the Youth Service Review Group report until March 31.

Students want second opinion

Students at Queen Elizabeth College, London, have demanded independent arbitration over a decision to transfer physics students to another college.

The QEC council decided last week that the 40 students should work at King's College from their second year onwards, which begins this October. Technically, they will remain QEC students.

The students already travel to the King's site in the Strand for lectures. Practical work and tutorials continue to be held at QEC but this will change from October.

The arrangement was designed to cushion the effect of the loss of physics staff from both colleges and was

Primary message gets through

by Patricia Santinelli

Applications for 1983 hachelor of education courses, in particular primary teacher training, have risen sharply on last year, according to figures released this week by the Central Register and Clearing House.

For both primary and secondary teacher training courses applications are now up by 14.6 per cent, or 8,719 compared to 7,608 in 1982. The global target for BEd degrees through the Clearing House was set at 6,700 - 5,100 primary and 1,600 secondary - when Sir Keith Joseph, the Secretary of State for Education and Science announced the final reductions in the autumn.

Although applications for primary courses are not yet in line with this target, they have risen from 759 to 1,146. The Clearing House regards the rise as a sign that the message of the government's policy of reducing the number of teachers in schools is getting through.

Decision on art school put back

Widespread public opposition to proposals to close Winchester School of Art has caused Hampshire education authority to defer its debate on the school's future until the end of March. A decision was to have been taken this week.

The new time scale has been drawn up to allow a working party to be drawn from the governors of the school, Portsmouth Polytechnic and Southampton College of Higher Education, the three Hampshire higher education institutions offering art and design courses. The party has been asked to report back to the committee on March 29.

It is now expected that a number of other possibilities as well as closing Winchester will be considered. It is the view of Mr Jack Burgess, the senior assistant chief education officer for further and higher education, that in the long run the authority cannot sustain art and design in all three institutions.

However we are now actively looking for a settlement which is more acceptable to public opinion than Winchester's closure," he said.

The general rise should also go some way towards reassuring the Department of Education and Science and others who have been sceptical that the BEd could truly recover from its low ebb of 1980 when some institutions met only 30 per cent of their quota.

The Clearing House says that there should be vacancies in most subjects but that as usual it is the most popular subjects such as physical education and English which have the highest applications as well as the BEd mentally handicapped courses, some of which are already full.

Applications for chemistry and physics have remained low with chemistry getting only 18 applications as opposed to 21 in 1982 and physics only 10 as opposed to 21. But general science and biology applications are up.

The boom in applications to Postgraduate Certificate in Education has been totally materialized. Applications are

slightly down on last year, 16,074 as opposed to 16,453, but this is still more than twice the number of places available. The target figure for 1983 is 7,600 compared with 8,200 in 1982.

The Graduate Teacher Training Registry warns that although there are still vacancies in all major secondary subjects and for general primary courses, these are filling rapidly, particularly in primary and also in biology and history which were given small targets.

The registry says that in spite of the earlier chaos due to the delay over setting targets, institutions are now processing applications very rapidly and within a few weeks the only vacancies will be in shortage subjects such as maths and physics.

It points out too that because of the limited number of places a number of graduates will be very disappointed and that students now prepared to go to other institutions to get on a course.

Pensioners urged to call free classes campaign

West Midlands pensioners are proposing a campaign for free local authority adult education classes for all pensioners, in a resolution to go before the annual meeting of their national association next week.

The resolution before the British Pensioners' and Trade Unions' Action Association condemns Government financial pressure on local authorities for local authority class fees increases.

It also calls on the conference delegates to instruct the association's new executive to launch a campaign for "free attendance for senior citizens at adult education classes."

The resolution comes from the 4,000-member West Midlands Pensioners' Association, which was formed in 1981, and is seconded by the Birmingham branch of the National Union of Teachers. The West Midlands is becoming some-

thing of a pensioners' blackspot for adult education, with the latest move by Dudley to raise its pensioner's annual fee from 30p to £30 pointed out particularly by the WMPA.

The WMPA's secretary, Mr Tom Patterson, said if a campaign was launched, its first task would be to find out what pensioners in all local authorities are doing to support their charges as closing classes indirectly, he said, because numbers were falling below minimum levels - in most authorities 12 students - when pensioners could not afford to continue.

A campaign would also seek support from sympathetic local authorities and other organizations, he said. "We know adult education to be an important part of the best use of a retirement years, which any government should applaud, and should be responsible for seeing it takes place."

Get together, says minister

Schools and further education colleges should form consortia to teach the 16-18-year-olds, according to Mr Alex Fletcher, the Scottish education minister.

Mr Fletcher told the Scottish Grand Committee in Edinburgh this week that the Government's action plan for 16-18-year-olds had received all-party support from Scottish educationists.

At present there were several hundred non-advanced further education courses. Most were individually tailored to the requirements of particular parts of different courses were virtually identical, he said.

The Government was proposing a series of individual subject certificates, which would record the completed courses.

between school and further education, said Mr Fletcher.

Mr Fletcher said he hoped senior pupils could take the new courses in their own schools or colleges. They could mix them with conventional higher courses, although he recognized there were difficulties because of the different teaching qualifications held by staff in schools and further education.

The action plan was largely welcomed by the Grand Committee, but there were objections to the language in which it was couched, he said. Mr Fletcher said that had its authors written "the never have understood" their request.

Inverness Technical College is urgently seeking funding from the Scottish Education Department for a major extension to cope with serious overcrowding.

News in brief

Lords map out science inquiry

The House of Lords Select Committee on Science and Technology has chosen remote sensing and digital mapping for its next inquiry. Remote sensing - detailed observation of the earth's surface by satellite-borne instruments - is the focus of a major initiative by the Department of Industry and the Science and Engineering Research Councils.

The committee is interested in mapping applications of the technology. Its choice may have been influenced by current controversy over the Government's own map-makers, the Ordnance Survey.

Occupation ends

Students at Bristol Polytechnic have ended their week-long occupation at the administration block after receiving a High Court writ. They claimed that proposals to move most of the humanities department to the art and design faculty site would cause severe overcrowding.

Parking space

Plans to build a science park at Sussex University are being explored in conjunction with the planning departments of Brighton Borough Council and the East Sussex County Council. Two firms have offered buildings provided the university finds a site.

Jobless plea

The Open University Students' Association has called for a permanent fund to support unemployed students. Mrs Pam McNay, the student president, has written to Sir Keith Joseph, Secretary of State for Education and Science, saying that all OU course fees are too high, despite this year's smaller increase.

Honourable move

Aberdeen University has conferred the title of honorary research professor on the directors of five local research institutions. They are: Dr Philip Ingham of the Rowett Research Institute; Dr Thomas West of the Macaulay Institute for Soil Research; Dr John Grieve of the Torry Research Station; Dr Alasdair McIntyre of the Marine Laboratory; and Dr Patrick Grant of the Institute of Marine Biotechnology.

Private matter

The Manpower Services Commission has appointed Mr Ken Stephenson as chief executive of its new skills training agency, to oversee privatization of the Government's 69 skillcentres which run MSC training schemes. From April Mr Stephenson will have to sell skillcentre training to businesses as well as the MSC to fund their £80m a year running costs.

AUT fights a new threat to tenure

by David Jobbins

Union leaders are claiming that ministers' use of the Privy Council to force through weakened tenure protection for university academics raises serious constitutional issues.

The Association of University Teachers is seeking talks with the Privy Council on the way it is implementing a ministerial decision to add clauses permitting dismissal on grounds of redundancy when new or amended charters and statutes are sought.

The Privy Council has called on the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, to submit "suitably re-drafted" proposals for its amended charter, and London University's Institute of Education is considering how it should respond to a similar request.

Mr Neville Lee, secretary to the Privy Council, wrote to Aberystwyth: "Ministers have now concluded that all new and supplementary charters for university institutions which contain provisions on tenure must include in such provisions explicit mention of redundancy as a reason for dismissal."

Most tenured academics may only be dismissed on "good cause" grounds - usually only for blatant misconduct.

The AUT regards tenure as a basic element of academic freedom. It has told

the Privy Council that it is normal for the union to be consulted when it is considering charter changes which effect the terms and conditions of employment of staff, and that many are subject to collective bargaining agreements which in some cases are legally binding.

Mr Laurie Sapper, general secretary of the AUT, said: "Whether they are legally binding or not it is monstrous for the Privy Council to sweep them aside without any discussion. This raises a major constitutional issue since our understanding and that of most governments - has been that charters and statutes are long-term documents, setting the shape of institutions, and never have been subject to day-to-day changes in government policy. Charters should not become the playthings of such policy changes."

Although Aberystwyth and the Institute are in the vanguard, other institutions subject to the ministerial instruction will include the merged University of Ulster - Ulster Polytechnic and the proposed University of Wales Institute of Science and Technology combination.

Although the AUT is to consider bringing pressure on Privy Councilors, its main tactic will be to persuade institutions not to seek changes in charters.



Students at work with the old fashioned Perkins braille

Braille machine out of touch

A lightweight and reliable machine allowing blind students to write and read in Braille is to be developed at Britain's only college specially for blind and partially sighted students.

The Royal National College for the Blind in Hereford has been awarded £125,000 to design a micro chip version of the Perkins Braille, standard issue for all the 1960s.

The Perkins, designed in America in the 1940s, and introduced in Britain during the 1950s is too heavy for young children to cart about, that it is too noisy to use to take notes in lectures, and that it often breaks down.

It is also expensive, costing £150. Mr Peter Talbot, vice principal of the college, said it was time to produce an updated version of the Perkins, taking new technology into account. "It is no exaggeration to say the Perkins revolutionized the education of the handicapped but we need a lighter model that does not breakdown so often," said Mr Talbot. The college has a technician who deals with breakdowns. The grant has come from the Mountbatten Trust. The college is to advertise for a researcher who will be able to use some of the 212 blind and partially sighted students at the college as guinea-pigs.

CDP faces shaky financial future

by Felicity Jones

The Committee of Directors of Polytechnics faces an uncertain future again as education authorities question its unique position in higher education.

Unlike the bodies which represent the principals of colleges, the CDP is funded from the advanced further education pool. Resentment has arisen because this funding comes from the pool which also funds the pressure group for the directors of polytechnics.

The Council for Local Education Authorities has called for a second report on alternative funding of the CDP to be ready for the April meeting.

Many CLEA members believe that the CDP is an anomaly which re-

ceives more favourable treatment than the Standing Conference of Principals and Directors of Colleges. One of the options is for a merger between the two bodies with a shared secretariat funded by the member colleges and polytechnics.

Another option could be to withdraw the money from CLEA and leave the CDP to survive on support from its individual members.

Another suggestion was for the National Advisory Body on local authority higher education to take over responsibility, but this would be difficult as polytechnics deal with non-advanced as well as advanced further education.

The proposal to merge with the

college sector arose a few years ago but did not lead anywhere. The CDP has been rekindled within the secretary which Dr Michael Lewis from Oxford Polytechnic takes up next month.

Although CLEA holds the purse strings, the Inner London Education Authority administers the grant after the CLEA has agreed to pay 10 per cent of total annual expenditure on polytechnics.

The criticisms of the CDP comes because it acts as an interest group for the polytechnic directors and the institutions themselves, while also providing an information and statistical service. These activities are considered to be at odds.

UMIST 'needs peace and quiet'

After a trying and difficult year which included "trial by newspaper", the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology needs a period of stability and calm to get on with its proper job, according to Professor Harold Hankins, its acting principal.

In the institute's latest annual report Professor Hankins describes attempts to come to terms with cuts imposed by the University Grants Committee. He also refers to the controversy over renovation costs at Highbank, the official UMIST residence, which ended in the early retirement of the principal, Professor Robert Hazeldine.

It was a relief to read the report of the committee of inquiry set up to investigate the "unhappy affair" at Highbank, Professor Hankins writes. The process of appointing a principal has now begun.

While the financial picture remained fragile there were some encouraging signs. "There is unanimity on the campus that the proposal put to us, that we should merge with Salford University is a non-starter and we have overwhelmingly decided to further develop our sensible and historical links with the University of Manchester, but as a separately financed UMIST," he says.

Mr Tony Russell, chairman of Imperial Biotechnology and former chairman of Lankro Chemicals and Diamond Shamrock Europe, is the new chairman of UMIST's council.

'Give 16-18s £25 a week'

A national mandatory scheme offering an index-linked £25 a week allowance to all 16-18-year-olds staying on in full-time education is necessary, according to the Child Poverty Action Group.

The group says in a report published this week that the non-means tested scheme would cost about £500m. It would be the only way of ensuring that young people from low-income families had equal access to education.

"The sum is little more than half the funds allocated to the Youth Training Scheme and is a tiny portion of the projected education and social security budgets of £13,000m and £33,000m respectively," the action group says.

In the report *No Choice at 16* the group argues that the present system of discretionary allowances is not sufficient.

"The scheme is arbitrary and inadequate. It does not offer a real choice at 16. Young people of identical circumstances will generally be entitled to different allowances in

different parts of the country, indeed in some local education authorities they will receive no award at all," the group says.

Its survey shows that at least five per cent do not even offer education maintenance allowances. They are: Cheshire, Dorset, Devon, Northamptonshire and Oxfordshire.

Less than half the local education authorities in real terms between 1979/80 and 1981/82. The highest cuts were in Northamptonshire, Sutton, Powys, Hertfordshire, Manchester and Humberside, where the cut has ranged from 100 to 400 per cent.

The average allowance paid in 1981/82 was £5.25 and the average maximum was £7.60. In most cases this was paid only to people with an income below supplementary benefit level.

No Choice at 16 - a study of educational maintenance allowances, by Louise Burghes and Ray Staples, Poverty Pamphlet 57, £1.25 from CPAG, 1 Macklin Street, London WC2.

Anger at plan to sell college

There is anger over the Scottish Office decision to continue trying to sell the former Callendar Park College of Education.

The College was axed in 1981 and transferred to the ownership of Moray House College in Edinburgh which has been directed to sell it by the Scottish Secretary.

A nursing college has occupied a third of Callendar Park since 1979, and the Scottish Office has decided that since there have been no offers

to buy the college so far, the nursing college should move to enable the whole site to be put up for sale.

But Mr Jim Thomson, past president of the Educational Institute of Scotland and a governor of Moray House, described the prospective sale as a cynical exercise.

The EIS and other educationalists want the college to be handed over to Central Region for community use, including schools and further education colleges.

SSRC staff prepare case against cuts

by Paul Flather

The joint trade unions at the Social Science Research Council are

representatives from the four unions were meeting a group of sponsored MPs, convened by Mr Jeff Rooker, to discuss the pamphlet and other ways of winning support for their campaign to back the SSRC and to fight threatened redundancies.

Staff are currently working to rule and refusing to cooperate with any instruction which might eventually lead to cuts in staffing of council services.

They are in dispute, following proposals to cut about 30 posts from the current complement of 148 over three years, and went on strike for nine days. Both sides are preparing for negotiations expected to start before the end of the month.

Mr John Macreadie, national officer of the Civil and Public Servants Association, one of the unions involved, said no one was under any illusion about trying to change the Government's mind on cuts.

The SSRC is considering writing to select scholars and institutions at home and abroad asking for views on an alternative if it decides to change its name.

The council failed to reach a decision at its last meeting, with a growing lobby arguing against any change and that at any rate no suitable alternative had yet been proposed.

A further £450,000 has been allocated to the study of social and economic problems, including the rates of fertility. In Northern Ireland by the SSRC.

The money marks the second stage of SSRC-supported research in Ulster, building on a total of £481,344 already allocated by the NI panel, chaired by Professor Michael Wise, professor of geography at the London School of Economics.

Priority areas are economic development, unemployment, education and training, agricultural policy, social and welfare changes, and population and demographic changes. Most of the work will be done in Ulster, in collaboration with official bodies such as the NI Department of Finance, or the NI Housing Executive.

Credit switch agreement signed

The Open University has signed its first credit transfer agreement with an overseas university - Trinity College, Dublin - and is negotiating

establishes a "one-for-one" deal whereby Trinity College students who complete one or two years of an undergraduate degree will be eligible for exemption from two or four OU course credits, respectively, towards the six necessary for an OU degree.

Open University students will similarly be eligible, although not automatically, to enter Trinity direct into the second or third years of subjects they have already studied.

The OU already has such arrangements with around 15 British universities, and with the Council for National Academic Awards. Informal discussions have already begun with the Irish equivalent of the CNA - the National Council for Educational Awards - and with the two higher education colleges which comprise the National Institute of Higher Education, to bring them into the credit transfer arrangements.

Closer links between the OU and the republic were mentioned in the agreement for a closer relationship signed by Mrs Thatcher and then prime minister Mr Charles Haughey. Talks on extending the links beyond credit transfer are also likely to take place over the next few months.

Trinity College's involvement was welcomed by the OU because of the college's proposals for an evening degree programme in Dublin likely to attract OU-type students, according to the OU's negotiator Dr Richard Holmes.

The OU has several hundred students participating in direct credit transfer arrangements such as these, compared with the much larger number of 8,000-9,000 - receiving the less generous terms of one year's fulltime study exempting the student from one credit instead of two, under "advanced status" arrangements.

Sir Kenneth Berill KCB will become pro-chancellor of the OU and chairman of its council on May 1 this year. He succeeds Sir Peter Thorneycroft, who was chairman of the University Grants Committee from 1969-73, head of the Government's Central Policy Review Staff from 1974-80, and is currently chairman of Vickers Dr Costa Ltd.

North American news

from Peter David

WASHINGTON President Reagan last week sent Congress a proposed budget for 1984 which has surprised and pleased the higher education community in the United States. Science is to receive a substantial fillip and federal grants and loans to students - a prime target in last year's budget round - are to be kept approximately at existing levels.

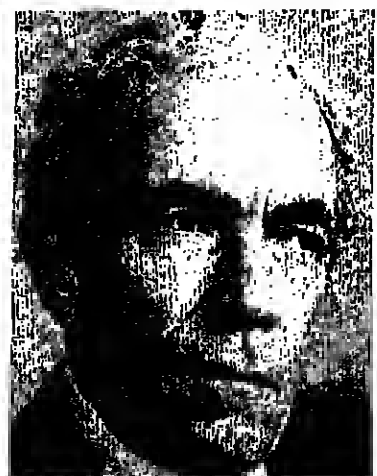
The American Council on Education, which spent last year in a furious Congressional battle against the student aid cuts proposed in the 1983 budget, said it welcomed the decision. But it had not yet had time to react to a number of significant changes which the president wants in the way grants and loans are administered.

According to Mr Terrell Bell, the secretary of education, the changes are designed to restore the traditional role of students and parents in contributing as much as they can to the costs of higher education. Only after these "self-help" channels - which included federal loans - are exhausted will a student become eligible for outright grants.

To make it easier for students to raise more money themselves the government is proposing to spend \$850m on college work study programmes,



Bell: "restoring traditional method"



Bell: condemned serious flaws



Reagan: produced "pleasant surprise"

where the government pays \$0 per cent of the wages earned by students taking part-time campus jobs.

The ACE, however, fears that campuses may find it impossible to cope with so rapid an expansion of the work study programme. It warned that many universities and colleges may be forced to create unnecessary "feet-dragging" jobs simply to take

advantage of the federal money. University sources also expressed concern about the administration's assumption that a majority of students would be able to earn and borrow up to 40 per cent of the costs of their courses. Senator Claiborne Pell, chief sponsor of the existing programme of "Pell" grants, said there were serious flaws in the proposal to introduce "self-help" grants.

He added: "Under the proposed self-help grants, students would be required to provide at least 40 per cent of their educational costs. Unfortunately, this 40 per cent would not include the contribution a family would be expected to make to a student's education. It would be in addition to that."

But the increases in the science budget are unusually selective, with the department of defence consuming a growing proportion of the nation's research and development budget. The White House has also decided to emphasize the physical engineering sciences - which contribute most directly to economic growth - at the expense of life sciences.

Social science, which was singled out for especially harsh cuts in President Reagan's first budget, is to receive a small increase of 17 per cent from the National Science Foundation. The increase is to be concentrated on the development of surveys and other data bases.

Explaining details of the new programme, the education secretary conceded that in some cases students would be unable to contribute 40 per cent of their college costs. He said that in such instances college financial aid officials would have the discretion to waive the new rule.

The 1984 budget proposes an increase of 17 per cent in federal spending on research and development. Universities are particularly pleased that much of the increase will be assigned to efforts to improve laboratories and instruments and encourage more talented young scientists to seek academic careers.

But the increases in the science budget are unusually selective, with the department of defence consuming a growing proportion of the nation's research and development budget. The White House has also decided to emphasize the physical engineering sciences - which contribute most directly to economic growth - at the expense of life sciences.

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Parental contribution rises

The Reagan administration last week proposed big changes in the federal government's system of grants and loans to students but promised to keep the total amount allocated next year close to existing levels.

Mr Terrell Bell, the education secretary, said the president's 1984 budget envisaged "a major philosophical shift" in student aid to return to the traditional emphasis on parental and student contributions as away from last year's policy of increasing federal grants and loans.

Mr Bell said that under the new budget the department of education would receive \$13,200m in 1984, nearly \$3,200m less than in 1983, but well above the \$9,200m which had been projected for 1984 in the president's budget last year. Student aid accounts for 43 per cent of the department's spending.

The real cut in the department's activities would be smaller because a fall in Treasury bill rates had made a substantial reduction in the cost to the government of its Guaranteed

Students Loan (GSL) scheme.

There would however be an important change in the distribution of student aid so that students and their families would contribute more towards the cost of courses, while the very needy would receive bigger grants.

From 1984 students would no longer be allowed to apply for any federal grants until raising at least 40 per cent of the costs of their courses through loans, work or private help. The new "self-help" programme would be merged in a single "self-help" programme. It would top up the funds a student raised through work study, loans and parental help.

To implement this change the work study programme, through which the federal government pays 80 per cent of the wages earned by students in part-time campus jobs, would be increased by 60 per cent.

Those students who qualified for the new "self-help" grants would be able to borrow up to \$3,000 a year depending on the cost of their course. Under the Pell programme the maximum grant was set at \$1,800.

Mr Bell said this proposal would mean that more than 80 per cent of

federal grant aid would go to students whose family incomes were less than \$12,000. By raising the maximum award and gearing it to variations in college costs, the new scheme would help students who wanted to choose private colleges where fees are higher than state institutions.

The new budget also proposes substantial economies in the gigantic GSL programme, under which the government underwrites low cost (9 per cent) loans to students. Last year the administration was defeated on a vote to cut the scheme.

This year the president is proposing that from next year all applicants for the GSL, not just those with family incomes above \$30,000, would have to prove they needed the loan. The fee charged by the government for underwriting the loan would be doubled from 5 to 10 per cent.

In a totally new proposal, the administration is asking Congress to establish Education Savings Accounts into which parents could put up to \$1,000 a year, with interest and children's higher education.

The cost of the accounts in lost tax revenue would be negligible in 1984 and grow to about \$200m in 1986.

Defence gets lion's share of increase

by Our North American Editor

President Reagan wants to spend \$47,000m on federal research and development in 1984, an increase of \$6,900m or 17 per cent over this year's level.

The proportion dedicated for basic research - of which about a half will go to universities - is \$6,600m, 10 per cent more than this year and an increase of more than 4 per cent in real terms.

Overall, the federal science budget with research and development allocation of nearly \$30,000m, some 30 per cent more than this year and 60 per cent of total government science spending. Most of the increase is earmarked for work on strategic weapons such as the Peacekeeper and Trident III missiles.

In addition, the Pentagon plans to increase spending on basic research in such areas as materials and microelectronics, and advanced technology developments in such areas as very high speed integrated circuits.

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) will spend about \$2,500m on research and development in 1984, approximately the same amount as in 1983. The department of energy will also receive no increase in overall research and development funding, but research will climb by \$160m or 18 per cent.

At the department of health and human services the budget increase in 1984 will be only \$100m, raising the total to \$4,300m. Nearly 90 per cent of that sum is devoted to the National Institutes of Health which conduct basic research in the biomedical sciences.

The national science foundation will receive an 18 per cent increase next year. The additional funds will largely be devoted to strengthening

basic research in the mathematical and physical sciences and engineering. The foundation will also spend on extra \$180m for upgrading university research instrumentation.

Mr George Keyworth, the president's science adviser, said the budget was intended to provide for growth in selected areas of national importance which were in dire need. As a result, there would be a marked difference in basic research increases for the physical sciences and engineering (15 per cent) and the life sciences (3 per cent).

"In a climate of intense fiscal scrutiny, it is no longer possible to spread increases uniformly throughout science. It is essential to concentrate them in areas that promise the greatest return to our foremost national priorities - industrial advances to fuel our economy and defence," he said.

University laboratories are expected to gain dramatically from the budget programmes. In addition to specific programmes that earmark funds for equipment, substantial equipment funds are being included in research grants and contracts.

In all, the five principal funding departments (defence, energy, health and human services, NASA and the NSF) will provide about \$400m as part of a long-term programme to upgrade academic facilities.

A number of projects planned by the department of energy will boost specific research campuses. A national advanced materials research centre is to be established at the Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory to improve links between academic scientists and those employed in federal laboratories or industry.

Other major projects include expanding the national synchrotron light source at Brookhaven; building a linear colliding beam accelerator at Stanford; and upgrading the Van De Graaff accelerators at Washington and Yale universities.

Maths teachers urged to improve

Mounting national concern about the poor quality of mathematics and science teaching in American schools is reflected in two new initiatives unveiled last week in the president's 1984 budget.

One programme, managed by the National Science Foundation, will encourage current maths and science teachers to take additional qualifications in maths, natural sciences and computer sciences. About 10,000 teachers will be able to participate in the programme every year.

The other, managed by the department of education, would provide use in training additional teachers in maths and science. The trainees

could include teachers in other specialties, retired teachers and qualified individuals from business and industry.

In 1984, the first year of the new block grant, some \$50m will be provided to school districts with the aim of training up to 30,000 new teachers over a four-year period. Both the NSF and the department of education programmes require matching funds to be provided by private sources.

Another programme, due to start in the current year, will entail giving 100 outstanding maths and science teachers a year. "Presidential certificate of excellence" and cash awards to improve quality

Overseas news

Science power switch urged in Poland

from a Special Correspondent Polish universities and the academy of sciences should hand over their responsibility for applied science to a new competent state body at ministerial level, according to Dr Zdzislaw Kaczmarek, chief academic secretary of the Polish academy of sciences.

He was addressing the recent general assembly of the academy on the "adverse trends in Polish learning, including the 20 per cent fall in employment over the last four years, and the deteriorating standards of available equipment."

Such a transfer would bring Poland into line with the other Comecon countries, in which such a "state committee for science and technology" (the name varies slightly from one country to another) has prime responsibility for applied research and its implementation in industrial production, although in some countries - notably the Soviet Union - the academy of sciences formally plays a "coordinating" role in the planning and administration of the national research effort.

Dr Kaczmarek said the proposed change had the backing of the academy's "authorities". It was not clear whether he was referring to the academic or party leadership of the academy - though during the "16 months" of liberalisation (from

September 1980 to December 1981), both sides expressed considerable discontent with the structure.

Indeed, until 1972, Poland, like all other Comecon countries, had its "committee of science and technology". But when it was realized that 75 per cent of research potential was employed within the university structure, a new ministry of science, higher education and technology was created.

The following year, a hierarchical system of problems was instituted, ranging from the seven "governmental problems" down through five under the patronage of the then minister, Sylwester Kaliski. All research in Poland had to be connected with some "problem", and an unseemly scramble for funding began in which every research group was trying to get his or her research the highest possible priority. The outcome was a "bizarre" postgraduate history student whose research touched on the Iranian oil crisis of 1953 and was rated as a branch problem, while in a prestigious agricultural institute, a pedigree herd was sent to the slaughter house since the relevant "problem" on the genetics of cattle breeding was considered to

be "solved".

Since the death of Kaliski following a car crash in September 1978 (it is rumored that the then party leader, Edward Gierek, was personally requested by the doctors to throw the switch on the life support system), the artificial "problem" structure has fallen into increasing disrepute. In 1981, the consensus of academic opinion was that it should be replaced by, at most, a two-tier structure.

At the same time there were fervent demands for the independence of the academy, coupled with its wish that its funding (about 10 per cent of the total science budget) should be at its own disposal. In particular, the considered opinion of the academicians (including party loyalists) was that a new law on the status of the academy was imperative. Under the present structure, the academic secretary (in this case Dr Kaczmarek) is responsible, not to his learned colleagues, but, in the first place, to the prime minister's office. During the liberalization period, there were increasing demands, strongly backed by the academic lobby, to clear the academy of its historical baggage, to a pedigree herd was sent to the slaughter house since the relevant "problem" on the genetics of cattle breeding was considered to

Poland, however, a sharp distinction has always been drawn between the two.

Even in autumn 1981, those Solidarity activists who theoretically advocated the merger of the two structures, felt that it was impossible in the current circumstances, since the combination of jobs involved would lead to unemployment. The extraordinary party meeting of July 1981 was unofficially acknowledged that for the national economy at least half a million jobs must be lost.

During the martial law period 800,000 "premature retirements" were encouraged, a large number of which fell within the academic and university sector, so that now there is a net shortage of jobs in higher education.

This has been exacerbated by the "verification" process, which has demanded that everyone teaching in universities must sign an oath of loyalty to the state. The process has been extended, it appears, to the academy institutes, which until 1980 were a traditional refuge of the scholar whose political views were considered too unorthodox to allow him or her to have contact with the impressionable minds of students.

Spanish dons let off new law

by Sarah Jane Evans University teachers have been exempted from new jobs legislation which is ruffling the sensibilities of Spanish MPs and civil servants.

The fuss relates to the Law of incompatibility, which came into effect on January 1 and was passed by the former Centrist government, and to the new Socialist government's proposed legislation to toughen and extend it. The new government was elected on a ticket which declared its intent to reform the state bureaucracies. In its first 40 days, it has made some strong declarations on the reform of the working day and week.

The "incompatibility" legislation is based, says Minister of the Presidency Javier Moscoso, on the principle "that public service demands authentic dedication, and prohibits the exercise of private activity by the public servant or through an intermediary."

Newly-elected MPs must choose between their previous employment or Parliament. Not all MPs are happy with this. The spokesman for the Parliamentary Socialist Party says that the typical objection comes from a doctor who is also head of department. If he resigns or is defeated in a general election, he may be able to return to medical practice, but he will have lost the departmental headship and the accompanying salary.

The proposed legislation throws up some interesting questions. What about the (state) TV weathermen who also work at the National Institute of Meteorology? Or the Socialist MP who is President of the Senate?

The state television and radio network is going to be a particularly hard case: it is estimated that 20 per cent of the staff hold down more than one job.

Universities are by general agreement so far exempt. It has already been agreed that university lecturers who are also MPs will be allowed to continue lecturing with honorary status, so long as the dean agrees, and they are not paid. Javier Moscoso says that he can see occasions when MPs who are specialists could give university classes. But, he says, "This must not be allowed to become a sort of passport to getting on the staff or the university promotion ladder."

In terms of salary, many Spanish lecturers will find little change. In their circumstances as MPs, the law will hit hardest at lawyers and businessmen.

More jobs for doctors

from D. B. Udalgama

Reduced employment opportunities in the United Kingdom and the Middle East, which in the past have been the main destinations of emigrating doctors from Sri Lanka, are likely to result in the estimated 900 vacancies in the country's medical cadre being filled, Professor A. W. Abel-Smith of the London School of Economics and World Health Organization consultant, has told the government. He was commissioned by the government to report on the financing of the island's medical services.

Professor Abel-Smith has also said that the output of British medical schools will from this year have reached its planned maximum, nearly double the output of the 60s. This has been planned with the aim of steadily replacing immigrant doctors, as they retire, with British doctors.

With the major expansion of medical education in the Middle East, opportunities for immigrant doctors are also likely to be reduced.

Too few books give Castro a headache

from Patricia Smith

HAVANA The sale of medical text books to first-year university students has landed Cuban president Fidel Castro with a constitutional headache.

All educational materials are supposed to be free, according to constitution. But there are so few books available that medical graduates are being forced to leave their reference books behind when they leave university and trust their study of the human anatomy, macrobiology and whatever, to memory. Not ideal for a country which is intent on becoming a medical world power.

So this academic year a pilot project was introduced to sell reference books, and even uniforms, to first-year medical students at cost price and on credit. If the experiment was successful the government planned to extend it to all medical students and later possibly all students.

The books crisis was not new but increased demand from a university population which has quadrupled to 200,000 in the last 14 years and a lack of resources have made it a cause of discontent.

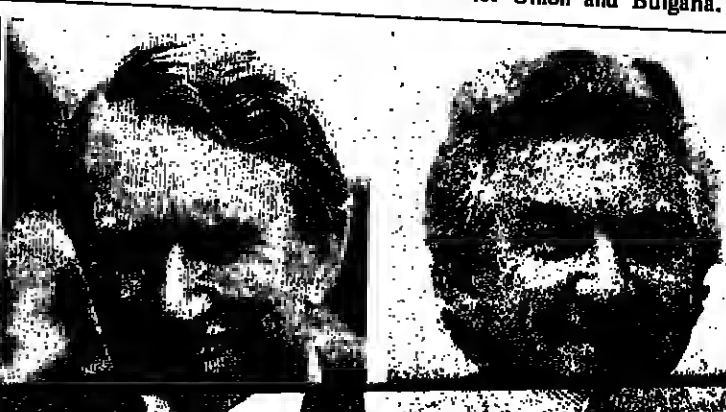
The ministry of culture was asked to put its printing presses into operation to guarantee books for every one of the first-year students. It succeeded. Only the constitutionalists were watching and were quick to point out that selling books and uniforms violated the constitution.

"No one wants to violate the constitution," said Fidel Castro in a speech to a recent conference. "But what are we going to make of these books that we have sold to the first year, something they wanted? We are not going to give the students their money back."

Castro had a better idea. "We'll have to invent something, like: 'No one wants to violate the constitution'," he said.

But even he didn't expect this would really work with the critics. The constitution would have to be changed, "and we don't want to touch the socialist legality that it has established". Jurists and tribunals would have to meet to interpret the law or even the national assembly itself.

"We will have to look for specialists, and I think in this field we are not very strong. In law, in judicial science, I don't think we are very strong. It's a real headache. If you leave it behind, you are leaving behind everything."



Malcolm Fraser

Bob Hawke

Teachers back Labour

from Geoff Maslen

MELBOURNE Australians will go to the polls on March 5 with the Prime Minister, Mr Malcolm Fraser, confronting the Labour party's new leader, Mr Bob Hawke, on the battlegrounds of the economy, wages and industrial relations. Education, while not a crucial issue, is certain to be a controversial topic.

Academic protests of the decline in higher education funding have become more strident and teacher unions have become increasingly concerned about the drift in funding and students to private schools. At a recent annual conference of the Australian Teachers' Federation, teachers voted to spend Australian \$150,000 in the federal campaign supporting Labour policies on education. Several state teacher unions are also certain to campaign against federal government education policies.

Although academic associations in colleges and universities are likely to take a more neutral line, they are certain to publicize the effect of the Fraser government's curtailment of growth in higher education and the disastrous state of research funding in this country.

The election outcome is uncertain although Labour needs only a 1.4 per cent swing overall to win 12 seats and take over. Mr Fraser's seven years of office have been marked by increasingly bitter divisions within the Australian community, especially the concern by government school supporters of the growth of the private school sector. The federal Labour party, however, if it wins office, is not likely to offer schools or institutions the sort of money that flowed from Canberra during the Whitlam Labour government. But it is committed to tackling many of the problems facing educationists.

Longer courses will give filip to economy

Changes in Albania's higher education law passed last month will increase the length of university studies, particularly in the applied sciences. For example, courses in engineering, geology, mining and industrial chemistry at Tirana University will be extended from four to five years, while at the higher agricultural institute, courses in agronomy, forestry and veterinary sciences will be extended from four to 4½ years.

Precisely what form the lengthened courses will take is not clear. However, at a meeting last November of the "Albania's People's Assembly (parliament)" it was stressed that the government considered the implementation of the economic plans to be "indivisible from the development of education and culture, science and medicine, particularly in raising the quality of the work done in our

schools." A large part of the additional course time will almost certainly, therefore, be devoted to practical work in industry or agriculture. The new syllabus schedules will bring an unexpected bonus to the economic target - more students in higher educational courses. The current five-year plan calls for a considerable expansion in higher education (50 per cent according to some commentators). Last month the People's Assembly was informed by the head of the state planning commission, Harrille Papajorgji, that this year the size of the student body would be 14 per cent above target.

The Stalinist tradition of planning, still retained in Albania, not only expresses targets and achievement in percentages, which for the most part relate to an inaccessible base date, so that it is difficult to

work out absolute figures. In the case of Tirana University, however, some figures were published last November, during the silver jubilee celebrations of the university. According to these, the student body now numbers 9,000, with an academic staff of 800.

During the last few months, the Albanian authorities have constantly and increasingly assessed the importance of higher education. This importance has been emphasized by the death of the minister of finance, Qirjako Mihal, drew attention to major shortcomings in the use of modern technology in agriculture, certain branches of engineering, and in the geological and oil-drilling industries - precisely those sectors in which university training is to be linked.

A stimulant for India's intellectuals

While most campuses are riven by strife a handful of institutes in New Delhi are improving the level of debate. A. S. Abraham reports

India's universities have probably never been in such a shambles. Throughout the country, campuses are marked by strife, strikes and scandals. Three of the most lavishly endowed and prestigious ones — Jawahar Nehru University in Delhi, All India Muslim University in Uttar Pradesh, and Baras Hindu University, also in Uttar Pradesh — have been all but paralysed by strife among student unions and between them and the university administrations, by examination scandals and by charges of gross nepotism and corruption.

These three are among a handful of higher education institutions directly run by the federal government. For that reason, they get more money, their staff are paid better and their student intake, from all over the country, is claimed to be of above-average quality.

For all that, they have reached a dead end.

Most Indian universities come under the jurisdiction of provincial or state governments, and here the picture is not brighter. Delhi University is recovering from a 14-week term schedules out of gear. Bombay University, still nursing the wounds from an examination boycott by teachers last year, as a result of which the current academic year began almost a whole term late, has had to appoint a special officer to ensure that examinations are held and results declared on time. One way this is sought to be done is by cutting the syllabus.

In the south, marks scandals in universities in Kerala are being prodded, as the credibility of their certificates is being questioned. In Gujarat, over the reservation of seats for the former in medical colleges. One consequence of the strikes of examinations that the trouble caused was the automatic promotion in name of students to the next year. Again, certification lost all credibility. In Bihar, notoriously corrupt and caste-ridden, examinations have been reduced to a farce as each vice



Mrs Gandhi's alienation from academics is near total

chancellor ensures that his cost can monopolize the first-class lists.

In Assam in the north-east, students have been spearheading a three-year-old campaign against "foreigners" (mostly Bangladeshi immigrants) in the state, a movement that has totally disrupted campus life. And in West Bengal, where a Marxist government has been in office since June 1977, the *bihadrak* (middle-class) of Calcutta have taken to the streets in protest against alleged Marxist indoctrination of school-children by rewriting textbooks and against the dissolution of secondary and higher education bodies prior to their reconstitution with pro-government majorities.

Only one kind of institution can be said to have kept its head academically above water. These are the Indian Institutes of Technology. Reeking of these "IITs" is the *de la* of school-leavers. Right at the entrance tests (the exception to the rule in India) make possible the admission of a possible of scholarships makes it to get in, and courses are flexible and up-to-date, emphasizing scientific, technical and humanistic learning.

IITs are not free of trouble; one recurring bone of contention is, again the reservations policy, which inevitably keeps out some bright sparks who are neither Untouchable nor tribal (the two groups covered by reservations).

But, by and large, IIT campuses hum with the best kind of student endeavour: experimental projects, extra-curricular activity, debate and contention, games, and a high standard of routine course work. Every year, IITs organize week-long festivals of intellectual and cultural accomplishment. These have become prestigious events in which some of India's most eminent figures take part.

The high IQ level of the student body guarantees that their time is not wasted, making the festivals a showcase of campus excellence and organization. Yet, the country does not benefit from this investment in education. The IITs, in most cases, never return.

For the most part, both teachers and students in Indian universities are bogged down in bread-and-butter issues. Teachers demand higher salaries, lighter workloads (to give them more time for productive leisure) and better working conditions. Students want thinner syllabi, lenient

marking, lower fees, bus and train fare concessions, and so on. "One outcome of this concern with 'hot-tomato' issues is the unionization of academics."

As hotbeds of opposition to Mrs Gandhi's increasingly repressive rule, universities were among the main targets of victimization during the Emergency. When it was lifted, the heightened radicalization of academics was conspicuous in their total (and continuing) rejection of all Mrs Gandhi stood for, in their support for the Janata Party in the 1977 poll, which saw Mrs Gandhi unseated from office, and in their militancy when pressing their professional demands.

Like academics everywhere, those in India are broadly left-of-centre, though this often mingles uneasily with a vague Gandhianism that sees in a utopian rural reconstruction a panacea for India's ills. Of late, however, the influence in northern universities, not least Delhi, of right-wing Hindu conservatism, as represented by the Bharatiya Janata Party (Indian People's Party), has become visible.

But academics of a liberal or radical persuasion see eye to eye with those of a conservative-religious cast of mind on opposing the "Congress five-star culture" that Mrs Gandhi and the party she heads are believed to represent. Mrs Gandhi's alienation from India's academics and intellectuals is near-total.

They may not agree on what the alternative to her should be, they may not even have an alternative, but they are convinced that she is the fount of all the country's political and social ills and so must go. They have not been impressed by what they feel to be the cruises she has lavished so much time and money on.

The Festival of India in Varanasi, the first of a series of such festivals, the forthcoming non-aligned summit conference in New Delhi in March will be a third. But they have been in the two Southern states, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, which were until now her strongest bastions. Perhaps because academics have

been primarily engaged in improving their social and economic position, they have not been able to provide the kind of intellectual and scholarly leadership they do in Western societies. Apart from the universities, however, there are a handful of specialized research institutes in the humanities and the social sciences, many of them concentrated in New Delhi, which have been an intellectual stimulant to Indian society at large.

Figures like Rajni Kothari, Ashis Nandy and K. N. R. have been engaged in the most rigorous and adventurous kind of conceptual thinking; they have helped to draw up the agenda of intellectual debate nationwide. Sociologists like Dr Andre Beteille (an Indian paragon of French origin), who is a university academic, have also made major contributions.

But it is journalism rather than academia which sets the tone of intellectual life in India. The phenomenal expansion of English-language journalism and of journalism in the major Indian languages in recent years, coupled with the use of advanced printing technology in especially magazine journalism, have given journalism an unprecedentedly vital role in defining India's intellectual concerns. Naturally, it draws heavily on academics, even as academics and shabbily got-up, wither away.

This is a sign of the times. For with spreading literacy and education, India is fast acquiring the elements of a mass popular culture. The mass media, and especially print journalism which, unlike television and radio, is not government-run, is vital in this set-up and academics are only too eager and willing to reach out to larger numbers of interested people than they can either in classrooms or in dusty research publications.

was partly intended to scare academics. In the event, it turned out to be less drastic than anticipated. The idea of importing lecturers from abroad can also be construed as a threat to Turkish staff.

Such claims are plausible, but extreme. Most lecturers have reacted to the present situation either by trying to ignore it or by trying to increase teaching obligations which could pose a major obstacle to research or by adopting an indifferent attitude, spending as little time on campus as possible.

The depression extending across most if not all of the university system is, of course, only part of a wider cultural depression consequent upon military rule. But inevitably it will also have social and political consequences of its own.

The Turkish press relies quite heavily on liberally-educated columnists and contributors from academics with new and controversial ideas. Other university staff and students have sought to influence the life of their country through parliament or government posts.

Meanwhile, the past two decades saw a genuine if patchy improvement in the quality of higher education as such.

Given the present pressures on academic freedom, can the universities continue to set trends? Given the inimitable public criticism of the HEC — not all of it from the left — can the universities retain their respectability? In view of the state of the social sciences in particular, can educational improvement be expected only in technical subjects? Much clearly depends on how soon the depression moves away. But with General Evren elected president for the next seven years (unopposed) and the HEC written into the constitution, the prospects are not good.

Turks have always had a high regard for learning, and the universities will no doubt become a matter of political debate as the new Turkish democracy grows in confidence. The universities recovered from a purge following the 1971 coup — communalism. This time, things will just take a lot longer.

Bernard Kennedy

Regional planning runs into delay

The directness and speed with which contentious issues have been raised, faced and, on the whole, dispatched is a justifiable source of pride within the National Advisory Body. Even some sensitive questions which did not demand to be raised in the NAB's first year — notably the matter of an increased proportion of two-year courses — have been met square on.

Yet there is one fundamental issue which remains far from settled one-third of the way through the national body's initial term of office. It is the question of a regional structure, which was given its own high-priority working group when the NAB was set up a year ago. The group is chaired by Mr Christopher Ball, chairman of the board, and numbers sufficient of the leading institutional representatives among its members to have been proposed (unsuccessfully) as a kind of executive committee for the NAB during the first few months.

Not surprisingly, the group soon came to the conclusion, in answer to the first question it faced, that some form of regional organization was necessary if the body was to reflect the determination of Mr Ball and of the NAB committee to maintain a genuinely local higher education system. Indeed, the NAB secretariat was given specific regional responsibilities, each assigned a secretary liaising with two regional advisory councils outside London.

By last November, guided by discussions on regional needs at the board's residential weekend in Oxford, the group had also identified the role which the outlying parts of the structure might play, at least in the medium term. For the purpose of the immediate planning exercise to draw up a national plan to meet the Government's target of 10 per cent cuts, it was accepted that the existing RACs would have to provide regional advice because of time constraints. And in the longer term, the group acknowledged that the experience of

its own proposals would be a valuable asset in the future.

It was agreed that the regional bodies would have to operate within the general policy guidelines determined by the NAB and carry out tasks requested by the central body. No close organizational link was envisaged between the NAB and the regional bodies, the latter retaining a similar degree of autonomy to that enjoyed by the RACs. Internal organization, membership and financing of the regions would be left for local determination with three suggestions only to be put to the local authority associations and the RACs. These were (and are) that the membership of individual bodies should be "acceptable politically and academically" to employers and trade unions and include representatives of the universities and the voluntary sector; that there should be links between the NAB and the regions at member and officer level; and that their internal organization should not result in increased operating costs.

Consolidation has begun on all of these points but still there is no favoured model for the regional structure itself. Three alternatives have been put forward by the group and accepted by the NAB board and committee, all of them well rehearsed in recent years but none with the official stamp of approval.

The first is to retain the RACs or something very like them — "territorial regions based on groups of local authorities." This was the solution favoured by the Oakes committee when the last Labour government proposed its own national body for public sector higher education. The Oakes report proposed no new regional bodies based on the RAC but possibly with different boundaries. Stripped of their responsibilities for course approvals, the new councils were to employ their own staff and be funded by their constituent local authorities. Large "umbrella bodies" were to include university representatives, the inspectorate and members of the national body itself, while small executive committees would deal with day-to-day work.

The second option has long been

John O'Leary reports on an issue which the NAB is still far from resolving

the aim of the polytechnic directors, whence the proposal sprang in the NAB's deliberations. "Cluster" regions would be based on groups of institutions rather than of local authorities and each would be centred on one or more major institutions. In virtually all cases, these would be polytechnics, which would take priority in the distribution of advanced work. The plan has never been put forward publicly in such detail as the models for the two alternatives posed by the NAB, but the directors have suggested the designation of "major institutions" to be complemented by satellite colleges in previous policy debates.

Finally, there is the most radical choice which was worked out by Professor Keith Clayton, the University Grants Committee representative on the NAB board and a member of the group examining regional policy. This proposal is for 24 "commuting areas" based on the feasibility of travel to colleges and polytechnics within the region. The scheme is similar to one put to the Commons Select Committee on Education, when it carried out its inquiry into higher education, by Dr George Brown, then director of North East London Polytechnic.

Dr Brown's plan would have been more localized and would have gone further, grouping together all post-secondary institutions in a given area (perhaps a city or a number of authorities) to form a single institution, dubbed a consortium. Although his ideas were not adopted by the committee, the idea of using transport lines as the basis for grouping together institutions was well received.

has also been without his accompanying a working system for instituting the introduction of a single Higher Education Grants Committee.

Although regional organization would appear a far less controversial item on the NAB agenda than some of those already confronted, it has proved a thorny problem to previous committees. The Oakes plan certainly did not receive an easy ride even before a change of government and, signed it to the annals of history, the select committee, too, received widely differing views and was split on the issue at the end of its inquiry. The majority report actually recommended the abolition of the RACs without their replacement by any new regional structure for higher education, seeing no need for "an extra layer of bureaucracy to inhibit decisions about courses which draw students beyond the region, which are nationally validated and in which 90 per cent of student support comes from central government."

The minority took precisely the opposite view, preferring to reform the RACs along the lines suggested in the Oakes report with the caveat that the new bodies should be specifically responsible for the universities as well as the public sector.

For the NAB, this argument at least has been settled but real dilemmas remain over the choice of system. There is strong feeling within the polytechnics in particular that the RACs are not a suitable vehicle for a regional structure and equally strong feeling in the colleges that, having won the battle for equal treatment in funding, they do not intend to play second fiddle in a cluster system. The commuting but may require strong attractions that may require too drastic a change to command itself to the local authorities.

A year into the debate, the choice of system is now out for consultation with the local authority associations and the RACs themselves. With the planning exercise about to envelop the body to the exclusion of almost all else, there is no guarantee of an early decision.



St Hilda's, Middlesbrough... a bleak spot for youth opportunity.

Backstreet blues

Five Select Committee MPs began their inquiry into training and education for teenagers in Cleveland... Patricia Santinelli reports

Cleveland, one of the bleakest spots in the North East and one of the highest unemployment areas in mainland Great Britain, was the first stop on a wide-ranging regional inquiry into 14-19 education and training.

Next week, in contrast they move to the more prosperous and lush pastures of Hampshire and then complete their tour later in February by visiting Richmond-upon-Thames.

The MPs — Conservative Tim Brinton and David Madel, and Labour Tom Blenkinsop, Christopher Price and John McWilliam of the Commons Select Committee for Education — had to limit their inquiry to these three places because of lack of time. But the areas in question were specifically selected because it was felt that they could give a broad picture of the 14-19 field.

The decision not to bring witnesses to Westminster but rather to seek them out was taken on the grounds that coherent evidence is more easily obtainable from local authorities on the spot. Moreover MPs wish to meet and talk with young people in the colleges.

The inquiry started with a Commission on the New Technical Vocational Education Initiative. It is likely that before the report is out — this may be before Easter — Mr Young will be asked again to answer points which have arisen during the regional visits. The committee particularly wants Sir Keith Joseph, the Secretary of State for Education, and Mr Norman Tebbit, the Secretary of State for Employment, to take note of its findings.

Middlesbrough, where deserted streets occasionally lined with dilapidated buildings express a despair of their own, was an extremely appropriate setting for an inquiry which as it turned out concentrated heavily on the impact of unemployment and the MSC's new initiatives on education.

Since 1974 the county's youth unemployment has risen by nearly 1,000 per cent, and Cleveland now has 10,000 young people unemployed. Slightly more than half are on special schemes with the remainder on the dole. The number of reported vacancies in December was eight.

None of these young people, either because they have exhausted their entitlement to schemes or because of their age, will be able to obtain a place on the YTS, a dangerous problem likely to be repeated in other parts of the country.

Added to this are apprenticeships in the county have fallen dramatically in the last three years. Only 500 school-leavers were taken on apprenticeships in 1982, more than a third less than in 1979.

This is likely to worsen with the advent of the YTS, as is shown by the pilot YTS scheme being run by FCI Wilton with Longlands College. The company has decided to take on normal apprenticeships but instead has recruited 197 young people, only 80 of whom stand a chance of full apprenticeships not jobs at the end of the scheme.

The economic difficulties being experienced by Cleveland will be a fundamental factor in the take-up of the YTS which the Government and the MSC want to be employer-led.

On the whole, both councillors and officers seemingly bent over backwards to stress that cooperation with the MSC was excellent. But it transpired that this was not so "excellent" as depicted. It appeared there was a fundamental disagreement between the careers service and the MSC about their respective roles in job creation schemes.

The MSC representative argued heatedly that the careers service had no role there and should not attempt to establish such schemes as it lacked expertise and contact with employers. This was hotly contested by the careers service which said that it had had a role in this area long before the advent of the MSC and had wide experience in encouraging employers to set up schemes based on the service's knowledge of what young people needed.

A little more sympathy but no concrete help was available from the MSC representatives over the imposition of eligibility rules which barred 17-18 year olds from apprenticeships but that these were unfairly

as it was already difficult to cope with the number of young people scheduled for the YTS within existing government resources.

He stressed — and it was a refrain that was to the heard often during the meeting — that the YTS would give young people better preparation. Therefore more would be likely to get jobs or be regarded as a desirable investment by employers. Another issue that emerged during the proceedings was the proposed territorial reorganization in the county and the impact of the YTS on the two proposed options.

The choice apparently is between a system where there would be increased cooperation between sixth form colleges and further education colleges, or the merger of these institutions into tertiary colleges. At the moment there are eight sixth form colleges and six FE establishments, including on art college.

It became clear that there is no unanimity on the subject either between councillors or officers. The chief education officer admitted that the capital cost of tertiary colleges would be high, but he did not regard a 10 per cent increase in recurrent costs as a major drawback.

This was obviously anathema to one of the Conservative councillors who in a fist-banging session declared that his party would oppose such a development virulently.

The YTS, it was felt, could have a substantial impact on either options mainly because of the economic recession which might render the scheme the only avenue to real employment, as more companies decided to take young people strictly on this basis.

The chief education officer feared that this coupled with the £25 a week allowance would directly effect recruitment to sixth form colleges which recently had been disappointing.

It would be ironic if an initiative to which the county council has given its full support should have the effect of undermining its own efforts," he said.

1952-1953

**COLIN
McCABE**

Below, seven academics, each involved in English teaching, give their personal views on what Ian Watt has elsewhere called "the complete diversity – or disarray – of contemporary opinion about what literature and its criticism is or should be".

PETER WIDDOWSON

In the brief for this symposium, one phrase keds straight to the heart of the matter: "the value of critical theory in literature teaching". What the phrase assumes is a discrete activity – "critical theory" – within the larger area – "literature teaching". It is a long-standing assumption in English schools (and one which is, paradoxically, responsible for the present debate) that the teaching of literature is, in its common empirical practice, theory free.

Courses in the history and theory of literary criticism there may be – even courses in contemporary critical theory – but these are not seen as the main business of what is, in the main, the subject of the discipline, the main business of which remains the detailed analysis and understanding of literary texts. And these are usually the "great works" or "masterpieces" – in whose canonization the criteria of value are for a long time and students to find out.

That seems to me to offer a key in the situation. Instead of maintaining blindly, but with growing heat, or variety of snail positions, we might think to making exactly that process the main focus of the subject itself. In short, I'm suggesting that we might abandon one of the original, founding notions of "English": that it should consist of the steadfast non-theoretical contemplation of self-evidently "great" works of literary art, undertaken in the belief that this will make us better human beings.

What strikes me as a much more valuable pursuit would require a slight shift of focus. It would require us to confront, not the "great" works of art in themselves but the ways in which those works of art have been processed, . . . produced, . . . presented, worked upon, in our own time and previously, as part of the struggle for cultural meaning outlined above.

This will inevitably involve a deep encounter with the study of theories of literary analysis and a subsequent encounter with literary texts in which the meanings of those texts are produced.

This is another way of saying that we should teach our students that texts are texts. As such, given our system of education, they constitute highly significant and sensitive areas in which competing forces within our culture struggle for domination.

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**DAVID
HOLBROOK**

cerns of feminism and current critical debates" (the preoccupation with the breakdown of nineteenth-century forms of representation and the emergence of postmodernist writing) (a preoccupation shared by Barthes, Lukács and Leavis among others). For it is clear in the case of writers such as Virginia Woolf and James Joyce that the shift in writing, which is recognized by all these critics, is either ignored or attributed, as a part of a shift in the ways in which sexuality has historically been experienced and understood; and that the language of modernist writing (in essence "literary" question) and the "non-literary" issue of the socially acceptable images of femininity and masculinity go hand in hand.

In fact, one of the most important challenges which feminism poses to the current debate (which, in the TLS at least, constantly relocked into the content/form, history/aesthetics dichotomy) is its insistence that the formal questions of *how* things are represented in language, and the more obviously political or ethical questions of *which* things are *chosen* or *allowed* to be represented in language, are reverse sides of the same literary coin.

This recognition has in turn been the subject of some important changes inside the different factions of the recent controversy, whose history is therefore inaccurately written if this fact is ignored. Thus semiotics, for example, far from being a homogeneous object or method which can simply be opposed to other traditions of analysis, has in itself altered from the earlier more "formalist" engagement with the structures of the literary text to the compatibility of this

type of investigation and new criticism has been remarked upon by writers such as Raymond Williams) to discussion of the historical forces shaping and transforming those structures on the one hand. On the other hand it has moved to an analysis of our subjective investment in language, an analysis in which the influence of psychoanalytic theory with its emphasis on the question of sexuality has been decisive.

These emphases then extend and relate to feminist criticism in this country and the United States: the history of women, the history of writing—one of the areas in which women have had a voice and how does this fact relate to their exclusion from other areas of public life? How far can sexuality and gender be used to determine the formal properties of writing? Here, again the question of history and form come together, since the problem is always stressed, that feminists have no institutional presence, of women and the available forms of expression and speech, for women, are insupportable.

Witnessing the striking omission of feminism from so much of the official and public debate about literature at a time when there is, for example, only one full-time women lecturer in English at the University of Sussex is, I think of 26, a situation unlikely to be remedied in the present economic climate, I feel the force of that conviction ironically reassuring itself. At the very least, it makes nonsense of the pretensions to radicalism of many of the participants in the present debates.

The author is lecturer in English at the

enjambelement, and so on. Few can give an adequate account of what the poem is about. I have just chosen

enjoyment and so on. Few can give an adequate account of what the poem is about. I have just given a fail mark to a candidate who used terms such as "incrementation", "optimistic mood", "optimistic naturalism", "moral liberalism" and "fluidity of thought" - but could not give a straight account of the meaning of the set poem.

Students no longer belong to an English community which is accustomed to using metaphor. They no longer hear the Authorized Version of the Bible or the Book of Common

Prayer. They do not seem to be taught poetry well, and they and their parents no longer read the great popular novelists like Dickens, in their youth; or at all. Of course, many respond eagerly to being introduced to literature as my students did last year to the last chapter of the *Book of Ecclesiastes*; but to use symbols in that way is a foreign language to them.

If, by contrast with the difficulties students have in reading poetry, one examines the implications of the printed "ripos" examination papers, one needs the good old Army word book. At the heart of our work there is the good old grind of trying to get students to read the works - *Martinez*, *Pope's Mohle's Essays*, *Great*

We struggle everlastingly to draw out articulateness in the students, and to help train them in getting the gist out of a book, in presenting a case, in appreciating quality. But here again, we must do this against a background in which, in the sixth form, students are no longer given a good wide humanities education. In this situation, to urge greater attention to literary theory is to con-

Invited to be polemically ohnoxious, I cannot help marvelling at Britain's capacity for wonder and exotic readiness. It feels good to be back on the site of a debate I would have thought had been settled a good while ago. But then I understand Marx himself is now making a strong appearance in the country's thought after having been heard of somewhat further away from Highgate.

There are literary texts and there are critical texts. Sometimes mixed. And ideological stands shape their production and use, explicitly or implicitly. It seems equally vain to try and dismiss an obvious dimension from either and to make such an ado of their opposition. Where is the innocent literary critic who could calmly argue that he or she has never had anything to do with some critical theory or another?

For all their respectable longevity, the most ancient British universities did inherit Aristotle, Plato and Longinus and started the confusion between "literary" texts and critical theory long before the "question" was even on issue. Secular developments on the beautiful and the sublime, utility, aesthetics and verisimilitude never relied – or I am misinformed – on the conclusions of a

Conversely, there is something quite and pathetic in seeing versions of radical chic rust with all their might against doors that were battered down many years ago. How, I wonder, could any dream of teaching literary matters without ever relying on an immense body of works alternatively described as philosophy, aesthetics; theory of fiction, poetics or "critical theory"? There are, obviously many "hondles" to choose from, but even the most convinced pragmatist has to borrow the pieces of half-made critical puzzle. Wixt seems to be at stake now is not exactly the fact that "critical theory" should have jumped out of a long-closed gate, but that the "subversive" values underlying a "new" line of approach

... threaten an ideological power
... to naturalize the values under
... it operated.
... suspect no one in his or her right
... and would discard "great works"
... merely conveying values that are
... exactly in keeping with his or her
... in our time. The question is
... that of a choice of ideologically
... "good" or "bad" authors for a "core
... curriculum". In the apple of know-
... the core is not necessarily the
... part either. There are texts that

one cannot avoid because they pose most of the problems critical theory has always placed before us. But what good would a reading of great texts be that contented itself with being compulsory and did not enhance one's critical abilities? Literature's volve shouldn't be made into mere moral or intellectual commodities, something one should have "under one's belt" before making an appearance in the world. Rather, all literary creators have to struggle with the problems of form, of meaning, of transparency and/or opacity, of textual economy, of psychological restraint or recoil, of relationship between socially inherited values and the subversive or cooperative power of their own voice.

ates them amounts to a "cop-out" that transforms literature into a mercenary supplement for the cultured instead of the extraordinary place it is for debunking the discourses we live in. Teaching literature does not mean equipping someone with the vocabulary required of social travellers; it is to transform consumers of discursive goods into critically aware individuals, psalmodists. Into de-

phers, *lisseurs* into *lecteurs*. Literature is a school for scandal; no literary approach may come forward without a modicum of explicit theory and not be alighty dishonest. Our responsibility to "great texts" is not only to make sure that uncritical respect for them is handed over from generation to generation unscathed, but to enrich them daily by showing how unskirtable they are because they "work" even from a "new" standpoint, because their resilience to reduction and recuperation is demonstrably enhanced by a new set of analytical tools. How much more fascinating innumerable writers become for having been enabled to deliver their reflections on the world.

All histones are written by the winners and "the great tradition" certainly does not escape the rule. It is important to keep looking in the distance for the reemergence of authors who, in their own time, "didn't quite make it" because critical attention was obnubilated by the then-prevalent frame of mind. It is one of recent critical theories' pretensions to honour to have helped rehabilitate

texts that had all but disappeared or become commonplace because they did not fit the canons of their times or serve them too closely. How could one even consider including contemporary writers in their curriculum if one had no sense of his own entriero? Make them public, advertise them, offer them for debate without ever allowing one particular critical theory to dominate hegemonically, as was too often the case. There are no noble texts and sinlmeftul texts. Mostly texts, among which is one free to offer those one believes are the most satisfactory, because of explicitly analysed and presented stonclorls. Merely, reread them.

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practise our subjective resources by association, access to dream, imaginative writing. Theory needs commit-

We used to let "critical history and theory" die of terminal care in a final paper, but surely no longer? Of course we need theory. "The most urgent need of oil," wrote Jerome Bruner of education generally, "is to give our pupils the experience of using a theoretical model."

Students have presented me with extraordinary achievements in return for mere suggestions about theory or method. Two students' *SIZ*-lan analysis of the end of *Joseph's Dream* is situated with me, and still extensible to an anthropological analysis of Lawrence's *Christening*: a linguistic analysis of its part of *Moby Dick*, and manifold critiques joyfully informed by the power of theoretical models to open poems. (Joyfully like the sun, she rejoices as a strong man, or in their cases often strong women, to be of race, to find their feet, to be before they can walk, and walk without man's

Another way of handling theory represented by Kate Belsey's account in *Literature Teaching Politics* of a class which studied Wuthering Heights and criticism of it - Cecil, Eagleton, etc. - in relation to one another. This makes distinct what the critical stances are; and what the implications are of their assumptions and (they have any) theory.

Yet those of my colleagues who are most skilled in theory seem most sceptical: they turn to a more personal way, or to non-academic life. And certainly the students who work well with me do so in classes where I begin by establishing interpersonal knowledge and group cohesion.

Theory advances when one plane of inquiry is lit by a metaphor from another, text, language, paradigm are such metaphors. As Doris Lessing shifted from political novels to Canopus, she showed where criticism is going now. The new metaphors are systems and group (Wilden, Bten), development and evolution (Bateson, Winkler), evolution (Baikson), English Teaching group). While theory decentres the subject, subjects are actually moving now towards the person-centred metaphors of Maslow and Rogers. Marxist dialectic is being overtaken by study of the dialectics of change - Morris in *Loss and Change*, Crook in *The Evolution of Human Consciousness*: "The nature, the pattern of change involves more than

the propositional stance,"⁶ leading to terms such as "feelings of distance and alienation."⁷ So in literary studies, the near future, literary practice will be as important as criticism as theory. There will be as much about humans as about literature. Subjectivity will be trained, by meditative writing, encounter. We shall work in interpretative communities. Interpretive as well as departmental, they will be their own. Interpretative as well as their own. Interpretative as well as their own. That is where coherence and consistency will come from; not from a doctrine but the community's or reflective work. Practiced will generate work, theory.

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there is an equivalent in the present. To refuse to debate film and television, to preserve purely literary courses, is simply to confirm our students in another illiteracy. The importance of film and television can be stated in terms of their direct relevance to literature — it is difficult to think of many of our major contemporary novelists who have not devoted considerable time to writing for the different mediums of television and film.

However, the questions with which both teachers and students must engage go well beyond any straightforward literary history. The cultural dominance of these new visual forms has delineated a very different space for writing than that enjoyed since the dominance of the book was established in the Renaissance. It is impossible to pose the question of the nature of the literature of our Protestant and imperial past without also posing the question of the value of the visual forms of our more secular and multicultural present.

Even these brief remarks should displace arguments about theory into arguments about history, and history understood not as a fixed and unchanging past but as a place in which the present is an interrogative tension with the past. Only thus can we grasp the complexity of our present, of the changing institutional spaces in which literature now

This is not to say that questions of meaning, interpretation and value would not be central to a new curriculum but they would be articulated across the whole range of need, not the not split off into some separate autonomous subject area. The curriculum along the broad lines of literary and cultural studies, history, geography, science, mathematics, representation and sexuality would find their point in analyses of specific problems and periods. To attempt to fix these questions in a new discipline entitled "critical theory" or whatever is to underestimate drastically the power and persistence of the answers they can produce.

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BOOKS

Adapting to war

War and the State: the transformation of British government 1914-1919
edited by Kathleen Burk
Allen & Unwin, £12.50
ISBN 0 04 940065 7

As one of his first tasks in the Ministry of Supply in 1940, Professor Oliver Franks sat down to read the official history of the Ministry of Munitions, thus illustrating both his sound academic judgment and the value of First World War experience for those who had to run the state under crisis conditions a second time in twenty-five years. As this valuable collection of essays makes clear, that experience was more often haphazard than planned, and was sometimes far less successful than earlier historians have supposed.

The authors approach the problems of governments engulfed in what steadily became total war from an administrative point of view. The wartime state (defined here principally by its function and departmental frontiers) is not conceived of as a social or ideological engine but simply as a product of the immense strains to which the peacetime apparatus was subjected. It rarely became more than the sum of its parts and at times, in the set-piece battles between the ministries studied here, it seemed almost to evaporate, as if government had been carried on under an involuntary momentum.

Even if it omits larger considerations of what constituted the state, this book would be like, rather than its authors would be, a collection of essays on the importance of bringing in business and engineering expertise to the Ministry of Munitions. Without subscribing to Lloyd George's extravagant claims for the latter, he does justice to the maligned War Office and rightly questions the belief that the whole experiment had much permanent impact on the organization of British industry.

Much more ambiguous in organization than individual departments, the network of standing committees of Cabinet described by John Turner suggests that, in his search for a comprehensive view of the whole process, Lloyd George should have been as broken rather than war-jord. Surveying central government from the sardonic perspective of the limitations of the bright young men who filled the "Garden Suburb", as José Harris shows, the important division of attitude to war problems lay not between "new men" and traditionalists already in the Civil Service, but between new and old mandarins, new or old. Her contribution, on the Ministry of Food, probes the only clear and general statement about the convergence of state and business interests and the consequences both for bureaucrats and the industrial markets they sought to regulate.

Created as a sop to the Labour movement and pocketed on continually by its older, more substantial rivals, the Ministry of Labour did little to restore efficiency to the labour market. Its history, as Rodney Lowe suggests, is more valuable in a pointer to the limits of government regulation, and to the history of conciliation in the inter-war years. In sharp contrast, the Treasury, which demonstrated and suffered for its ineptness in 1914, found itself restored in peacetime to full control over government expenditure, with vast powers over the domestic money market and the Bank, to say nothing of the civil service, of which it had become head in 1919. Series of changes which the editor explains by reference to public and parliamentary preoccupation with the war, and the volume of waste, economic stagnation, Labour, Food, Munitions, all suffered in the outcome. Peter Clarke lucidly buries Tawney's argu-

ment that Treasury and resurgent capitalists were to blame for the abolition of controls, pointing out how widespread had been the belief that the war itself was an aberration. His detailed history of planning for reconstruction after 1915 demonstrates that controls occurred in response to external threats which were still prevalent in 1918. Once national security had been won, the focus for them simply disappeared.

Some of these general points have been made before, but it is valuable to have them argued in sufficient detail for specialists. The authors have difficulty however with the question, was wartime organization of the state successful? True, each department's procedures can be estimated in relation to their products: shells, food, workers. But war production demanded more: an orderly labour market; productivity and technical innovation, as well as volume production. Comparison with the Second World War might have provided a clearer focus.

The essays discuss government de-

partments in wartime, their responses and incremental growth, rather than the state and war. They advance considerably our understanding of British bureaucracy under stress but tend to do so through the bureaucrats' own perceptions of their tasks. There is little here about the ethos of any department and whether it was modified or confirmed by war, or the difficult questions expressed in later years. Was the state interest always identical with these of the various publicists that governments sought to manage? Could politicians, mandarins, and outside experts or businessmen agree on much more than simply winning the war? Contradictions here may explain why it turned out to be so much easier to revert to prewar methods than inquire what national needs might be after 1918.

Keth Middlemas

Dr Middlemas is reader in history at the University of Sussex.

French ambitions

French War Aims against Germany 1914-1919
by David Stevenson
Oxford University Press, £19.50
ISBN 0 19 822574 1

This is a highly competent book, and it is pleasant to welcome an admirable analysis of France to the growing area of "war aims" studies. But unlike studies of German ambitions, this contribution on France reveals few striking or surprising characteristics. This is the most fascinating part of this book turns out to be the discussion of the flow of influence in wartime French politics. Here is economic hardship, indeed, not only the economic hardship, but the political and social changes that came about. Part of this success derived from the essential simplicity of the French of an unprovoked invasion and the in real doubt. The same fact, however, did not have expansionist ambitions in Europe before 1914; her war only served to emphasize her security. In order to acquire and maintain reliable alliances she had been willing to pour money into Russia to support the Franco-Russian alliance and play down imperial ambitions to bring about the entente cordiale with England. During the war, because of war aims and realpolitik, she changed her circumstances of the war.

Through it all, however, it can be seen that France's long-term concern to prevent any further attack from Germany took two forms: economic and territorial. The economic ambition was to shift the economic balance of power towards France and gain a short-term advantage through a rapid reconstruction after the war. This was to be achieved principally by the reparations to be made by Germany. The territorial ambition swung from the extreme proposal which would have put the Franco-German frontier on the Rhine, to the more moderate hope that a separate state in the Rhineland.

With the collapse of Russia in 1917, the French search for a guarantee of security was made more urgent and more difficult. For the Russians had always been willing to embark on a policy of "sacrifice" on a serious point of view, and they were now France's only ally. French aims would have to be pursued with both more devotion and realism than before.

In the second half of the book, Dr Stevenson discusses how far French policy was successful after 1918. She

did achieve reparations - to an unstated amount - by cooperation with the British, and an effective veto upon the evacuation of the Rhineland by an arrangement with the Americans. She certainly capitalized on Woodrow Wilson's willingness to surrender on matters of detail in exchange for support on rhetorical generalities and the League of Nations.

The cost, however, was great. French intransigence at the peace conference embittered Anglo-French relations in the post-war period. Inevitably France's German dealings remained fraught. The Anglo-American guarantee, for which the French had given much, foundered. In the end, the fundamental French war aim was not achieved. The Anglo-American guarantee proved to be no substitute for the Russian alliance, and when it was withdrawn, no effective alternative at all could be found. It is barely possible to discern even the faintest outlines of a French policy in the aftermath of the war.

The American came, as Dr Stevenson records, Clemenceau's comment was succinct: "It will all be useless".

Richard Langhorne

Richard Langhorne is a fellow of St John's College, Cambridge.

Austrian prejudice

Socialism and the Jews: the dilemmas of assimilation in Germany and Austria-Hungary
by Robert S. Wistrich
Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, £17.50
ISBN 0 8386 3020 6

The role that the Jewish question played in the politics of German and Austrian social democratic parties and political activists for quite some time. Most of what has been written has been in the context of coming to terms with the phenomenon of antisemitism. *Socialism and the Jews* by Robert S. Wistrich, now of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, is no exception. Where the book differs from previous studies is in its attempt to view the problem in the full breadth of its political, economic and ideological context.

In investigating the attitudes of the political socialist movement towards antisemitism, the author identifies two phases in its development. During the 1870s and 1880s, in the period of the "rise of Adolf Hitler", Christian Social movement in Berlin and the antisemitic laws of Bismarck, the German labour movement itself felt threatened and took up the cause of defending Jewish civil equality. At the same time, they continued to be critical of Jews as capitalists and liberals. It must be remembered that in this period most adult Jewish

males in Germany were engaged in one form of commerce or another, mostly as rural traders and shopkeepers but also as entrepreneurs, and financiers. They supported the National Liberals and then the Progressives as the initiators of emancipation and lesser feire economic policies.

With the emergence of a more populist antisemitism in the 1890s the attitude of the social democratic leadership became more equivocal. Wilhelm Liebknecht, Franz Mehring and August Bebel, for example, took the view that in making clements of the peasantry and petty bourgeoisie aware of their exploitation under the capitalist economic system, even if only by Jews, such agitators as Otto Beekel in Hessen and Hermann Ahlwardt in Prussia were playing into the hands of the labour movement. Most supporters of the antisemitism, they believed, would soon realize that they were being deceived and eventually turn to the Social Democratic Party as the only true representative of their class interests.

Although this view underwent some transformation with the pogroms in Russia and they still clung to the belief that Jew-hatred was a product of socioeconomic backwardness and was, as a consequence, doomed to disappear in the course of time, Dr Wistrich is quite right to point out that this analysis ignored completely the history on anti-Jewish prejudice in pre-capitalist society. Though Rosemarie Leuschen-Sepel's recent illuminating study *Sozial Demokratie und Antisemitismus in Kaiserreich* covers much the same ground as *Socialism and the Jews*, curiously nowhere in the text or bibliography is the book mentioned.

The main strength of the book is its exposition and analysis of the situation in Austria, where the stance of the socialist movement, under the leadership of Victor Adler, himself of Jewish origin, was even more equivocal than that of the German Social Democrats in the 1890s. Quite rightly, Dr Wistrich sees part of the explanation in the disproportionate political and cultural life of Austria.

An interesting discussion of "the shrines that fall" to establish the cults of likely-looking candidates for veneration (just as living claimants, like some heretical preachers, might be vanquished by their failure to match the miraculous achievements of better supported rivals) raises the question, not much ventilated here, of how miracles came to be recognized as such. This "medieval mind" to which Sister Benedicte relates her miracles is, by and large, that of the men who recorded them. Her analysis of their methods and motives, from the purgatorial adoration of the golden statue of St Faith of all too conspicuous monuments of pagan idolatry to the glorification of the miracle of a boy near Norwich who was the subject of a lucrative cult, is most valuable, and certainly supports her claim that these records provide "a way of approach to the ordinary day-to-day life of men and women in all kinds of situations and in all ranks of society".

Michael Riff

Dr Riff is lecturer in history at Queen Mary College, London.

Saintly events

Miracles and the Medieval Mind: theory, record and event 1000-1215
by Benedicte Ward
Scolar Press, £17.50
ISBN 0 85967 609 9

When, early in the eleventh century, a self-named Stabbe lay away from the great monastery of Fleury on Loire, St Benedicte's visitation in a dream and made him return. When abbey's cellars they found it, frozen in the barrels. Like other patron saints in these lawless generations both the foundation at Montecassino and Benedicte (which claimed to have his bones) against the depredations of various inmates who failed in

their duty to the house and aggressive neighbours who coveted its lands and privileges. A century later, in better times, he could exercise his powers more gently in healing the sick who flocked to his shrine.

Sister Benedicte Ward's admirable study of the miracle stories, which abound in every early medieval chronicle and saint's life shows very clearly what they were for. In the context of the theological and literary traditions in which the stories were cast she discusses a wide range of collections of miracles, particularly those reported at shrines, from that of St Faith at Compiègne, very popular early in the eleventh century, to St Thomas at Canterbury and the growing cult of the Virgin, especially at Looon, Chartres and Rouen, around the late Middle Ages.

Miracles might take many forms, but in all they established or authenticated claims - the claims of the saints to acknowledgment of their sanctity, of their shrines to authority and property, or of living holy men like Bernard of Clairvaux and Hugh of Lincoln to be "Christian saints, powerful and holy according to scriptural pattern". Miracles, therefore, appeared particularly when there was conflict, and where fame was sought by new centres - the great pilgrimage shrines of Compostela, Rome and Jerusalem had no need of spectacular cures to establish their preeminence - so that properly understood they offer a sensitive and revealing seismometer of social change. Here the characters of the saints - Faith and Cuthbert doubtfully defending their churches in troubled times, William of Norwich and Becket's exhorting proper respect for themselves and their powers as their cults did for widespread recognition - are vividly realized. The adaptation of holy power to the needs, ambitions and deals of the shrines and their guardians, as in the transition from miracles of power to "miracles of grace" exemplified by the changing repertoire of Benedicte, is delineated with subtlety and perception. One important consequence is that miraculous cures, whose importance is easily exaggerated, are put in their proper perspective.

Every grammar popularizer (and there have been many recently) has one major hurdle to surmount: how to explain Einstein's general theory of relativity without heavy mathematics or obscure abstract concepts. General relativity not only provides the theoretical underpinning of all modern gravity research, it opens the door to most of the fun topics - spacewarps, timewarps, gravity waves, naked singularities, black holes - that make the intelligent layman rush out and buy a book on the subject.

There is much rubbish on the theme. Full of bad physics and sentimental mumbo-jumbo verging on the occult, Narlikar's book, mercifully, is a no-nonsense account by a professional physicist who nevertheless retains the flavour of excitement and mystery.

I do have some quibbles; the absence of a bibliography, for example, and the rather textbookish style of the opening chapters. There are also some technical points which worry me. One of these concerns the peculiar way in which a rotating black hole drags an approaching observer round in a sort of "space vortex". Narlikar compares this with the way an aircraft in flight keeps pace with the Earth's rotation. But this has nothing to do with the "space vortex" phenomenon. It is purely a Newtonian effect.

Also on black holes, the author's description of the Hawking effect - a quantum process which causes the hole to emit thermal radiation - is in my view badly misleading. He talks about the creation of pairs of particles near the hole's event horizon, and goes on to claim that one particle of each pair has a positive energy, the other a "negative energy". It may happen, we are told, that one goes down the hole, the other flies off into space - and it could be the negative energy one that comes out or vice versa. In fact, this naive labelling of individual particles by a definite energy was long ago demolished by quantum field theory. True, a flux of negative energy does go down the hole, but not on a simple particle-by-particle basis. Indeed, quantum theory explicitly forbids the use of the particle concept altogether in this context.

R. J. Moore

R. J. Moore is senior lecturer in history at the University of Sheffield.

A second edition of Thomas T. Mackie and Richard Rose's *Interpretation of Electoral History* is published by Macmillan at £25.00.

BOOKS

Cosmic enigma

The Lighter Side of Gravity
by Jayant V. Narlikar
Freeman, £13.95 and £6.95
ISBN 0 7167 1343 8 and 1344 6

Gravity is at once familiar, yet mysterious. It keeps our feet on the ground, but has weird overtones that modern research does nothing to dispel. Add the black hole connexion and you have topics that perennally fascinate those who generate a seemingly endless flow of books aimed at that enigmatic animal, the intelligent layman.

Jayant Narlikar is an international renowned scientist and writer, a one-time steady-stateman and collaborator with Fred Hoyle, who now works at the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research in India. Professor Narlikar's association with the steady-state theory of the Universe (a rival to the now generally accepted big bang theory), and his professed distaste of black holes, does not diminish his authority or enthusiasm with which he writes about both the big bang and black holes. Nor can he afford to ignore them, for it is only in the primeval Universe or close to collapsed objects such as black holes that gravity is strong enough to be really interesting.

Every grammar popularizer (and there have been many recently) has one major hurdle to surmount: how to explain Einstein's general theory of relativity without heavy mathematics or obscure abstract concepts. General relativity not only provides the theoretical underpinning of all modern gravity research, it opens the door to most of the fun topics - spacewarps, timewarps, gravity waves, naked singularities, black holes - that make the intelligent layman rush out and buy a book on the subject.

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and well-balanced account of modern gravity research.

The author's discussion of the big bang could, I believe, have been a bit more up to date. The subject has undergone a major revolution in the past few years, with the application of high-energy physics to the very early stages. Magnetic monopoles, GUT's phase transitions, baryon asymmetry, and the so-called "inflationary scenario" are now by far the most important theoretical preoccupations of cosmologists, but unfortunately none of this "new cosmology" gets a mention. Nevertheless, I am sure we can look forward to further skilful works from Professor Narlikar in the future.

Despite its light-hearted title, this is a serious, well-written book with a good background reading for science undergraduates, and enjoyable bed-time reading for those with little technical knowledge of, but a fascination for, one of science's most exciting and important topics.

Paul Davies

Paul Davies is professor of theoretical physics at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne.

Computing merger

From Hardware to Software: an Introduction to computers
by Graham Lee
Macmillan, £16.00 and £8.95
ISBN 0 333 33164 8 and 24363 3
Computer Science: a modern Introduction
by Les Goldschlager and Andrew Lister
Prentice-Hall, £6.95
ISBN 0 13 165704 6

Computing can be viewed either as an engineering exercise, building from raw materials, or as a means of

these two streams are now merging. The software people see the virtues of the disciplines of engineering, while the hardware people can now incorporate code into their designs. However, the merging is not complete and these two books take completely different approaches to the same task, that of initiating the novice to computing.

This requires some explanation: after all Lee calls his book *Hardware to Software* suggesting, rightly, that he covers the complete spectrum. The list of contents explains my categorization. He takes a constructional view of the topic: given an empty box and some relatively vague ideas about what a computer consists of, what do we need to place in the box to turn it into a fully-fledged computing engine? The early chapters are thus concerned with logic functions, gates, adders, registers and the like, building up to the point at which we have enough sections to serve our needs. We then add a control unit to organize everything, switch on and stand back. Nothing happens, of course, because we have no software.

So the second part of the book takes a similar approach to programming, given that we have some general idea what we mean by a program and a black box machine (now populated by hardware) what do we have to do to get that program running? We now work through loaders, assemblers, subroutines, macros up to high level programming. Some books would give up at this point and it is gratifying to find credit that be is granted through with chapters on compilers and interpreters, parsing, operating systems, and so on, leaving the reader with a view of the whole system.

The result is a thorough, no-nonsense book, divided into 26 relatively digestible chapters covering individual topics. As a broad view of the inside of a computer system the book is a success, yet it fails to square up to both the question of why we are going through this construction kit exercise and, more fundamentally, what modern computing is about. This is the point at which we pick up the work of Goldschlager and

Lister. You cannot fail to notice that this volume does not cover the same slant as the authors have not taken the constructional approach to everything which has to be explained and therefore do not have to explain the student should grasp by the end of their book.

Thus, they launch straight into algorithms with no mention of logic levels or programming techniques, giving what ought to be the correct impression that a computer is a means to an end and that therefore out of this fall the basic constructs which you need to find in a language, but the next chapter moves on to the theory of programming and how any algorithms. It is hard to see how any introduction to computer science can be complete without giving at least a taste of such concepts as computability and NP-completeness.

Only after this do the authors introduce the physical components of a computer, yet they treat this topic in an impenetrable way. There is thus a feel for fabrication technology, which ought to be enough to stall the life by next year's school of microcomputing, while microprogramming gets a separate section. Next we move on to language translation and operating systems, followed by applications and finally a chapter on social issues: employment, privacy, human redundancy and other topics usually ignored.

The result is some insight into what the subject is, but with obvious and necessary gaps at the lower level.

Forced to choose I would go for Goldschlager and Lister as the better book for introductory computer science courses, although I can well see that engineers might prefer Lee. My one criticism of Goldschlager and Lister is that if anything they are slightly self-consciously up to date, not to the extent of being the academic equivalent of middle-aged punks, but enough to make us

more authors attempting this approach.

P. J. Willis

P. J. Willis is lecturer in computing at the University of Bath.

Cartesian coordinates

Descartes' Philosophy of Science
by Desmond M. Clarke
Manchester University Press, £19.00
ISBN 0 7190 0868 9

Descartes' *Meditations*, published in 1641, was the "barbaric" of several years' work, deceptively compressed into an impenetrable, fictional diary which could be read "at a sitting". Readers were baffled and Descartes was disappointed. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, however, the *Meditations* was adopted as a philosophical classic. In recognition of its infectious anxiety about how any beliefs can be justified, it was posthumously acclaimed as the Origin of Modern Philosophy. Even today, it is still the standard instrument of initiation into the mysteries of the professional philosopher's trade.

There is a serious problem, however, about this use of the *Meditations* - Descartes was actually a brash and bullying self-confident natural scientist rather than an anguished metaphysician. The philosophers have tried to get round the difficulty by dismissing Descartes' science as an old-fashioned "rationalist" delusion, rather than a serious empirical rendering of physical facts, although his interpretation have not given this interpretation much support. Now at last, under the umbrella of a new series devised by M. A. Stewart to promote a "contextual approach to the history of philosophy", we have a conscientious philosophical response to the problem.

Desmond Clarke's *Descartes' Philosophy of Science* sets out to present Descartes as "a practising scientist, a few short and relatively unimportant philosophical essays". So, boldly ignoring the *Meditations*, Clarke has examined some of Descartes' scientific and methodological writings, and shown that in spite of his notorious remarks about "innate ideas" and the unreliability of the senses, Descartes did not propose that ordinary science should flout the central question of rationalism in science", Clarke concludes. "Descartes is unquestionably innocent at least of traditional charges that he ignores or distrusts experimental evidence."

Descartes' *Philosophy of Science* skimps, however, when it comes to substantive issues in physics. Clarke draws examples from Descartes' laws of motion and his explanations of rainbows and of blood circulation, but he neglects his mathematics, his cosmology and his theory of gravity; and the "burden of experimental work" under which Descartes is said to have laboured is regrettably left unexplained. The positive themes to which Descartes devoted most of his life - the concepts of inertia and of the relativity of motion, the denial of vacuum and of action at a distance, and above all the ideal explication of everything physical in terms of the spatial properties of a homogeneous matter in law-governed motion - are

displaced by Clarke's preoccupation with refuting the "traditional charges" against Descartes. The trouble is that Clarke is so concerned with the table of a tug-of-war between reason and the senses in the development of scientific thought, and with allowing that Descartes was not in the wrong team, that he fails to see how little connexion the whole story has with any of the theoretical choices which faced seventeenth-century scientists.

It may be, however, that Descartes' "unimportant philosophical essays" have more bearing on serious scientific themes than either Clarke or the traditionalists have noticed. And Descartes' *Meditations*, rescued from the guardians of philosophical mythology, would then reveal itself as the manifesto of an evangelizing physicist, which after all is what he was.

Jonathan Rée

Jonathan Rée teaches philosophy and history of ideas at Middlesex Polytechnic.

An edition of James Clerk Maxwell's essay *A Dynamical Theory of the Electromagnetic Field*, presented to the Royal Society in 1864, with an appreciation by Albert Einstein, has been edited with an introduction by T. F. Tynner and published by Scottish Academic Press at £7.50.

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BOOKS

EDUCATION

Means and ends

An Introduction to Philosophy of Education, second edition
by Robin Barrow and Ronald Woods
Methuen, £8.75 and £4.75
ISBN 0 416 30330 7 and 30340 4
Philosophy of Education: an Introduction
by T. W. Moore
Routledge & Kegan Paul, £3.95
ISBN 0 7100 9192 3
Means and Ends in Education
by Brenda Cohen
Allen & Unwin, £8.50 and £3.50
ISBN 0 04 370122 1 and 370123 X

Any writer of an introductory text in philosophy of education has a two-fold purpose; to sensitize readers to the conceptual and evaluative questions embedded in educational theories, issues and policies in general, and to advance intelligent analysis of a particular set of topics. In so doing his task is to combine philosophical rigour with practical relevance so that his readers will extend this competence to other areas of professional concern. The rapid development of this field of study over the past two decades has opened up a range of strategies toward this end.

Robin Barrow and Ronald Woods, in their *Introduction to Philosophy of Education* (first published in 1975), chose to place emphasis on initiating students into a particular way of thinking; this second edition bears witness to the usefulness of their approach. Taking a range of contemporary central to educational argumentative meaning and philosophical issues to those who would wish to

advocate. This book will provide a clear, concise and readable introduction for students who wish not only to clarify their thoughts on particular issues, but to pursue further studies in this area.

Brenda Cohen's *Means and Ends in Education* is yet another type of introductory text, the third in a promising new series which isolates single themes and examines their philosophical background and implications, presuming no previous knowledge of the field but providing direction for further study. Cohen's theme is types of teaching method, which she classifies as fitting utilitarian, progressive and liberal perspectives on education and sees as embodying differing assumptions about the nature of man and differing aims for the educational process.

The first two sections of the book largely eschew conceptual analysis in favour of the consideration of underlying theories. For example, in exploring the behaviourist basis of programmed learning, a range of problems in philosophy of mind and introduced and the theoretical adequacy and ethical acceptability of instrumentalist approaches to teaching are questioned. Though one warns to the thesis that "Any demand... that the scientist should be given control of the classroom should be viewed with extreme caution", this should be further supported by epistemological arguments, since the effectiveness model of pedagogy

Ruth Jonathan

Ruth Jonathan is lecturer in education at the University of Edinburgh.

Schools in infancy

Samuel Wilderspin and the Infant School Movement
by Philip McCann and
Francis A. Young
Croom Helm, £15.95
ISBN 0 7099 2903 X

rated as a "great educator". He is children, such as the use of apparatus and the schoolroom gallery and his educational achievements have been much underestimated by historians. This first biography, based on hitherto neglected writings and recently discovered papers, sets out to put the record straight; to show how important Wilderspin's ideas and activities are to understanding the significance of the early infant schools in England. Philip McCann, an experienced historian of English education contributes the more substantial section; other chapters are by Francis Young, Wilderspin's great-grandson, using his own independent research.

Wilderspin had a somewhat idiosyncratic educational career. He started as an artisan teaching Sunday School and then took employment at an infant school in the working-class district of Spitalfields. In the 1820s he branched out as publicist, his own "system" and promoter of new infant schools. Initially as agent to a short-lived Infant Society then as freelance educationalist, travelling the country, lecturing, holding exhibitions, inspecting and monitoring schools and finding teachers for them. This phase ended in an acrimonious dispute with opponents of his brand of education which led to his exclusion from the movement when the "evangelical" Society founded in 1836; Wilderspin went on to contribute to such movements as the Liverpool Corporation and Dublin Model Schools, before settling in an active retirement as a lecturer at Wakefield Mechanics' Institute.

The interest of this meticulous study derives from the way it establishes Wilderspin's credentials as a key figure in the infant school movement of the 1820s and 1830s. He was held, of study in theory, and a balanced position between competing theories, accommodating insights from a variety of models is generally embodied and teaches false assumptions not only of how people learn, but of what there is to know.

David Reeder

David Reeder is senior lecturer in education at the University of Leicester.

BOOKS

EDUCATION

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Croom Helm, £11.95
ISBN 0 7099 1130 0

A number of DES-sponsored programmes during the last few years, such as the IT-INSET Project and the Teacher Education Project, have developed new teacher training materials and explored methods of bringing trainees and experienced classroom teachers in closer working proximity. *Teacher Education in the Classroom* describes the experimental work done at the Open University which involved teams of beginners and experienced teachers being encouraged to work together for their mutual benefit. This marriage of initial training (IT) and in-service work (INSET) led to the experiment being called the IT-INSET Project.

The empirical approach preferred by the team meant that the process began with the analysis of current practice followed by the application of theory. Until recently conventional teacher training tended to operate the other way round, to the chagrin of many students. Twenty different training institutions participated in the project.

The authors explain the philosophy on which the project was based and give examples of the sort of collaboration that occurred. In one middle school, for instance, a teacher, a tutor and two students worked together in humanities lessons. The teacher would take the whole class for a topic and the children would then be divided into four smaller groups. The assignment for the team was to observe how children subsequently discovered in the information and then to devise ways of helping them to elicit such knowledge more effectively.

This book is an honest statement of what the project entailed, documenting failure as well as success. Heads of schools were principally motivated to take part because they saw an opportunity for professional development for their teachers, colleagues rather than through direct interest in initial training for novices, but once they had agreed only about a third of them became involved with the planning.

The authors analysed the most and least successful teams and concluded that commitment to collaborative work and the enthusiasm of the college tutor in particular were required ingredients for a successful team. The ability of the tutor to develop the head to professionals' development were also influential. Teachers generally felt that the project had benefited pupils and 'gains in specific skills or knowledge' was the most highly rated pupil outcome.

With the reduction of the teaching force there are fewer extrinsic rewards, such as promotion to 'higher status' or salary levels, for experienced teachers, and thus they may in future find satisfaction in honing their pedagogical skills. The self-analysis which occurs through work with beginners, if the latter are encouraged to be both keen and critical, may well produce this improvement for many seasoned professionals.

Changing Priorities in Teacher Education is another sort of collaboration, this time by 17 authors interested in comparative education. We can often persuade ourselves

that, because of our slightly eccentric tradition of localism in England and Wales, we have little to learn from countries with a more centrally controlled curriculum, but the comparative dimension is an important if neglected one, and it is a pity that the price for this camera-ready book will prevent it reaching a wide audience.

William Taylor's opening chapter uses the ingenious trick of comparing an imaginary John Smith, teacher per capita income of 15,000 dollars a year, with his poor counterpart John Fulani living in a country with a mere 300 dollars income per head. The rich John has received an 18-year education with well equipped classrooms and laboratories, highly qualified teachers and lavish audiovisual facilities before finding his first day a week job as a telephone-linked computerized job information service. The poor John on the other hand shares 25 books with two hundred other pupils and learning to write on a slate. His short teacher training course is conducted in his third language and it relies heavily on dictated notes in the absence of

books. Officialdom rarely delivers his institution's requisitions. The stereotypical contrast is at its most extreme, but it is a telling way of showing marked differences.

The collection of essays contains some good contributions from Edmund King and Nigel Grant on teacher education in industrial and communist countries, and a series of case studies of Belgium, British Columbia and Latin America. There are also descriptions of training in specific fields such as physical education and modern languages.

Although some of the chapters are thin, at least two thirds of the book offers a most worthwhile comparative dimension. The problems faced by teacher educators in Britain have frequently been confronted elsewhere, and even the chapter on developing areas reminds us that considerable invention has been shown by countries we might be strogant enough to assume were only at a rudimentary stage.

E. C. Wragg

E. C. Wragg is professor of education at the University of Exeter.

Important news

Reconstructions of Secondary Education: theory, myth and practice
by John Gray, Andrew F. McPherson and David J. Raffe
Routledge & Kegan Paul, £14.95 and £7.95
ISBN 0 7100 9265 2 and 9268 7

Many books about education in "Britain" ignore the special traditions and structure of Scottish education. This volume is a useful corrective to this, in that it deals mainly with Scottish secondary education.

The "myth" of the subtitle refers to those special beliefs about the nature and purpose of Scottish education, which have their origins in the Knoxian plan for education as part of a Godly commonwealth. This includes a commitment to a generous public provision of education and the belief in its power to transform people's lives. The totemic figure in folk description is the "lad o' pairts", who, however humble his origins, makes his way from "omnivorous" parish or burgh school to university, mastering a profession to serve in the colonies or to return home as the domineering teacher.

The power of the myth helps to explain why comprehensive reorganization was earlier and more extensive in Scotland than in England and Wales.

The "theory" of the subtitle refers to the official expectations of the consequences of comprehensive reorganization, which are broadly similar to those in the rest of Britain: increased educational opportunities and the possible reduction of social inequalities. The "practice" of the subtitle is the authors' comprehensive review of the outcomes of comprehensive reorganization, drawing upon a number of surveys, mainly of their own design and execution, including a postal questionnaire completed by more than 20,000 young people, representing nearly 40 per cent of all school leavers of 1976. The introduction of O levels while retaining the Higher and Standard system has been associated with a greater specification of studies, so that the Scottish ideal of the broad common curriculum has been eroded. The policy is allowing more access to these high status courses than CSE is in the social policy survey tradition, but is something of a compromise. It cannot provide the close, observed view of the educational processes of the more recent phenomenology, as this book shows. It can still deliver some important news.

closing of the class gap.

Several sections of the book are concerned with aspects of education that are less specifically Scottish, and these are rather less interesting, and the research they draw upon being less successful. As in other studies, the authors are not able to show that increased certification has led to a "tightening bond" between education and occupation; eligibility credentials have been raised in response to the transition from school to work makes extensive use of the leavers' self-reported experiences and opinions, so that the basis of the discussion of "the influence of employers on schools" is rather distant from real events. However, there are some conclusions that do seem convincing.

Not those who the poor? Youth Opportunities Programmes, completion of which becomes a further qualification in the competition for jobs. However, initial qualifications were not related to the chance of getting a job (as distinct from the status of the job), but those with the poorest qualifications lost and changed jobs most frequently.

The least successful and interesting chapters concern the leavers' retrospective reports of their experience of school and truancy, and the "effects" of school. These analyses have the feel of researchers' making what they can of the limited original data available to them. Although there are some quotations from with ten accounts of school, these are mainly calculations of percentage responses to a limited number of questions, including whether they ever got the belt or strap. The authors are suitably modest about their rather inconclusive analysis of the "effects" of school differences on attainment, which add little to the widely doubted conclusions of Rutter et al.

All three authors are or were members of the Centre for Educational Sociology founded by McPherson at the University of Edinburgh in 1973. South of the border the sociology has usually been called the sociology of education, following the American practice of eschewing "educational sociology", which flourished there in the 1950s, as being often empirically and theoretically weak, and embodying institutionalized educational value-judgments. None of these charges applies to the CES; its work is greatly concerned about the applications of research and its relation to policy and practice. Its tradition is in the social policy survey tradition, but is something of a compromise. It cannot provide the close, observed view of the educational processes of the more recent phenomenology, as this book shows. It can still deliver some important news.

Ronald King

Dr King is reader in education at the University of Exeter.

Wiley

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edited by C. Smith, Department of Physiology, Queen Elizabeth College, University of London

The book covers the many problems that derive from the use of microcomputers in education and the training of teachers. It looks at the broadly based applications of microcomputers in fields such as school administration, special education, computer graphics, and classroom equipment. It is the first book of which the publishers know to cover so comprehensively the introductory areas of microcomputer use and has been divided into three logical sections: management problems in education, computer languages for education, and applications.
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BOOKS

EDUCATION

Making plans

Challenge and Change in the Curriculum
edited by Tim Horton and Peter Raggatt
Hodder & Stoughton and the Open University, £4.60
ISBN 0 340 28774 8
Planning in the Curriculum
edited by Victor Lee and David Zeldin
Hodder & Stoughton and the Open University, £4.95
ISBN 0 340 28775 6

In increasing numbers of secondary schools, the days are gone when a sound grasp of a subject and firm classroom control were the only yardsticks by which we judged a good teacher. The 1980s teacher must participate in decision-making, policy-making and the management of large departments - even faculties - which means responsibility for introducing pupils to expanding realms of knowledge selected from the ever-growing fund of human wisdom and learning. There are also the political obstacles from groups, inside and outside the school, namely, the DES, the i.e.a., parents, governors, exam boards and disputing factions of teachers within the school, all mindful of the new religions of accountability and evaluation. These two books, readers for the Open University course "Purpose and Planning in the Curriculum" show the wider professional teachers are now expected to demonstrate.

There are some stimulating pieces from Malcolm Skilbeck, Denis Lawton and others who address themselves to varying conceptions of the debate about a common curriculum versus a selective

tradition. The essays on the management of innovation range over strategies and examples taken from several countries including Perle's work. Bernstein's useful typification on the organization of school knowledge and Elizabeth Richardson's discussion of the continuous staff conference.

The second book has a more practical orientation with articles on curriculum models, classroom research and teaching styles by some of the well-known names from both sides of the Atlantic. Curriculum studies is seen as a form of applied research. Many of the selections are seminal pieces from books and journals which are assembled here in a very accessible form. What I found refreshing was the attempt to include writings of an "anti-curriculum" nature, representing the more open-ended approach to subjects and pupils. There is an article on a Danish free school, a piece by the American radical, Carl Rogers, and an extract from "Teaching as a Subversive Activity" by fellow Americans Weinberger and Postman.

But it is here that my reservations about the two books are located. I felt that the discussion of "alternatives" was somewhat restricted in two ways. First, although a few of the authors seem to acknowledge that the object of their grand schemes, namely the pupils, might conceivably have opinions on the way they are educated, nowhere in these collections do we find this properly explored. When will curriculum-mongers accept that the pupils are an integral part of their models and flow charts and possess unique realities as individuals which must be taken into account?

My second regret also concerns a missing factor or alternative. While the ideological foundations of certain curriculum approaches are well represented here, such as the social democratic model and the radical-libertarian view, the new scholarship based on a Marxist perspective, from France, the UK and the USA, is totally absent from these pages. Is it too late to add this to the mix?

Barry Dufour

Barry Dufour

Barry Dufour is lecturer in education at the University of Leicester.

Not just statistics

The Self-Evaluating Institution: practice and principles in the management of educational change by Clem Adelman and Robin J. Alexander
Methuen, £10.95 and £5.50
ISBN 0 416 32740 0 and 32750 8
Keeping Track of Teaching: assessment in the modern classroom by Harry Black and Patricia Broadfoot
Routledge & Kegan Paul, £5.95
ISBN 0 7100 9017 X

During a period of financial cutback and attendant calls for accountability books on evaluation and assessment will become numerous. However, they will not necessarily be books that relate narrowly to testing for selection or insist on punitive accountability. Here are two books from very different traditions, that see assessment and evaluation in a broader, more positive way: a means of improving and strengthening the professional skills of educators.

Clem Adelman and Robin J. Alexander have produced penetrating case studies of institutional evaluation, in two institutes of higher education. Harry Black and Patricia Broadfoot have written a useful book about a wide variety of classroom assessment procedures.

Their approach is broad enough to include pupil self-assessment and course evaluation as well as the more usual "cognitive assessment" and therefore overlaps with the concerns of Adelman and Alexander. They demonstrate the substantial development that there has been over the last ten years, since Freddie Sparrow edited the Schools Council's *Evaluation in Curriculum Development: twelve case studies*.

Gone are the days when a knowledge of assessment meant simply a knowledge of statistics. The growth of the field has been remarkable in both the last ten years and the techniques

The presentation of data is relegated to supporting this descriptive stance. The book contains a useful introduction to the literature review, however, in an area which is so loosely integrated it is possible for experienced practitioners to overlook work that bears importantly on the issues they are discussing. Adelman, for example, states with confidence the Schools Council's official line that the lack of success of large-scale curriculum projects led it to give support to local initiatives with a high degree of teacher involvement. But he does not refer to the reports by Stephen Steadman and his colleagues on the "Impact and Take-up" of the council's projects. The reports show quite clearly that lack of success could clearly have been the reason for the Schools Council's change of policy. Similarly, Alexander refers to his evaluation of Charlesford as "the first major 'internal' institutional evaluation in British teacher education". While this might be true in a strict sense he does not mention a prior evaluation of the Sussex Postgraduate Certificate of Education which was available in 1972 as a Social Science Research Council report and was published, in part, in a similar Methuen series in 1977.

Black and Broadfoot take us directly into the problems of assessment through the device of inventing two schools; Old Normridge with its continuous assessment and letter-grades and Hilltop Primary with its checklists and recording sheets.

The design and procedure for each method of assessment used in the schools is clearly set out and each is sympathetically discussed. Hilltop contrasts with Normridge in wishing to relate assessment to the individual needs of the child and this extends beyond academic achievement to

personal and social development. The book is particularly strong in introducing in a sensible, non-technical way the techniques for the assessment of individual learning. Each stage of the school career is dealt with in turn. There is no important section on pupil self-assessment and the effect of this kind of assessment on learning. Other important issues relating to accountability and assessment are raised but not fully explored. Finally there is a useful chapter on profile reporting and its application to school learning and job applications.

This is a practical book based on examples and illustrations. Perhaps it is therefore unfair to criticize it for its lack of critical awareness and its failure to discuss some of the deeper implications of assessment and evaluation. I did not find my feeling of disappointment until the last chapter where Old Normridge is revisited. The rather stale repetition of previous issues here allows the book to decline at its end: the hoped for analysis or critique of assessment was missing. It is quite illogical to suppose that because the authors are writing a book about how to improve assessment that they should omit a critique of assessment and its function in our society. The examination industry overloads the curriculum and has a "demoralizing and limiting effect" - particularly for low-achieving pupils. A fuller exploration of the one or two limitations of the present system, like its effects of high-achieving pupils and its deeper implications for our society, would have made a stronger concluding chapter.

Collin Lacey

Collin Lacey

Collin Lacey is professor of education at the University of Sussex.

What do they do?

Directors in Education

There is little evidence here, or elsewhere, to support the view that the performance of the CEO is irrelevant to the quality of the local education service. As might be expected it is the concerns of the 1970s which dominate. In some cases the

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BOOKS

EDUCATION

Radical profession

The Cautious Expert: an analysis of developments in the practice of educational psychology by John C. Quicke
Open University Press, £14.95
ISBN 0 335 10110 0

Educational psychologists still do not constitute a large professional group, but since the mid-1960s the number of psychologists in the education service in England and Wales has grown rapidly, to an establishment of about 1,000 at the present time. During this period, too, there have been changes in the role of the educational psychologist, stemming, in part, from a search for a professional identity, but also from new demands and pressures. These have resulted mainly from local government reorganization and legislative measures affecting the health, social and educational services as well as from expanding knowledge in relevant areas of psychology.

Many educational psychologists today would readily fit the description of Quicke's using, as John Quicke puts it, "bits and pieces" from various theories and approaches. However, perhaps the main change in educational psychology is the perception of its role has been from seeing it in terms of the traditional clinical model, with the emphasis on individual children as "cases", to being concerned with modifying the school system through the more general application of psychological knowledge and skills. In this book, Quicke seeks to clarify the conflict between "status quo maintenance"

among educational psychologists leading up to an exposition, admittedly tentative and incomplete, of his own ideas for a more radical profession.

The first two chapters provide a concise but informative account of the educational psychologist's role, at times in the face of medical opposition, to achieve a full professional role, and of the rapid build-up of a school psychological service standing apart from the clinically orientated child guidance service. The emergence of a relatively independent profession of "educational psychologist" is outlined in the context of the growth of other professional groups, for example, local education authority advisers, school counsellors and remedial teachers, some of whose functions overlap with those of psychologists.

Chapter three is largely taken up with criticisms of the traditional "psychometric" approach, but in later chapters Quicke is just as ready to challenge practices in vogue such as behaviour modification and those derived from the "boot-directive" style of Carl Rogers. His shifts are sharply focused, and he is willing to question assumptions often too easily accepted. However, he argues from an insufficiently firm basis of knowledge about what educational psychologists actually do. For example, he "clearly" pictures, emerges, in the course of a lengthy discussion of the psychometric approach, of the ways in which educational psychologists actually work, and for some of the evidence, for instance, that in schools "traditional" psychologists typically align themselves with liberal ideology. Quicke does draw upon the responses to his own professional knowledge questionnaire, completed by 291 educational psychologists, but this is very superficial, limited in scope and supplemented by interviews with only nine, i.e. a psychological working in the same school psychological service.

The final chapter contains a useful discussion on how the educational psychologist can help to avoid the negative effects of labelling children, and some interesting suggestions for reforms in professional practices, based mainly on interactionist philosophy. This perspective is seen as one in which "the individual's needs are seen as socially constructed and the institution is not perceived as an impersonal monolithic structure but a series of relatively permanent social arrangements continually being subjected to negotiation and interpretation by participants".

The author attempts to spell out the implications of this stance for practice, but too sketchily for these to be really grasped. Although concision tends to remain at a rather abstract level, somewhat remote from the everyday concerns of practising psychologists, for example, Quicke's suggestions, for example, that the radical educational psychologist should relate to pressure groups both inside and outside school, seem likely to lead to disaster in the case of professionals who already tread a tight-rope in their dealings with a variety of individuals and agencies with differing frames of reference.

Quicke seems to underestimate the value to psychologists of assuming a detached position and of making an objective appraisal as possible of the problems with which they deal. Further, while it is essential for educational psychologists to get to know schools well, little reference is made in the book to the importance of children and families through first-hand contact. Perhaps, too, it is healthier at this stage to encourage a wide range of well-considered approaches to the practice of educational psychology rather than to accentuate the conflict between more extreme traditional and radical viewpoints.

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It's not fair

Fairness in Children: a social-cognitive approach to the study of moral development by Michael Siegal
Academic Press, £16.80
ISBN 0 12 641380 0

If the reader approaches this book as I did, expecting to find a detailed examination of the nature and development of fairness in children, he is likely to be frustrated and exasperated at every turn by apparent irrelevances and digressions.

It is true that the author does deal with fairness. But in order to get to his treatment of it the reader must encounter discussions of such topics as the nature of science, the history of social learning theory and the development of children. Indeed, one might be pardoned for dismissing the book as a somewhat self-indulgent display of the author's not inconsiderable erudition. However, if we change the title to something like *Contemporary Approaches to Socialization and Moral Development: an assessment and synthesis*, the book can be seen as a coherent, valuable and possibly significant contribution to the literature.

Clear, accurate, succinct and critical accounts are given of the relevant aspects of the perspectives of social learning, Freud, Piaget and Kohlberg, with references to their empirical underpinning. Of course there are many, many accounts of these perspectives in the literature already. What distinguishes the author's treatment is his reassertion of the importance of Piaget's social-psychological theory and of the process of identification, and hence of the significance of parent-child attachment and the family. There is also a thorough

ened, and parents are likely to offer less attractive models for the child to identify with. It should be said that although Siegal offers circumstantial evidence suggesting that such a hypothesis would be worth testing he provides no direct test of it, and there are of course other considerations which might suggest it is not true.

The implication of the book's supplementary title is that Siegal is attempting like others before him to evolve a synthesis of the theories he deals with. Such syntheses are always uneasy. Such theories are so disparate as to be nearly irreconcilable. They usually consist in either the translation or assimilation of one theory by another, or a loose federation of heterogeneous concepts drawn from them all. Siegal's attempt is of the second kind, and it can hardly be said that he presents a social-cognitive theory in any systematic way. But it is the strength of each of these theories that it gives salience, validity, to certain features of the process of moral development that the others neglect. Siegal is surely right, therefore, since his goal is to understand the process, to draw freely from different theoretical traditions if they seem to add something significant to that understanding.

The book ranges over a wide area in a highly condensed, careful and scholarly way. The fact that in 200 pages the author succeeds in referring to at least 500 publications is an indication of the kind of book it is. It is hardly a book for the general reader. It should prove a useful text for those following courses on moral development. For the specialist in this area of study it provides a useful review of recent empirical evidence and offers some challenges for theoretical formulation. But it has to be said that at the end we are not a lot wiser about fairness in children.

Derek Wright

and education has been edited by Ronald Carter and published by Routledge & Kegan Paul at £5.95. All the contributors are united in their belief that linguistics should be a central element in the education of teachers, and argue for a "principled and systematic analysis in the study of the role of language in learning."

HISTORY OF EDUCATION

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The authors are based at the British Library's reference division, Great Russell Street, London WC1.

microfilm

How lenders make the most of microfiche

The British Library Lending Division has a considerable collection of research materials in microform and about 5 per cent of its acquisitions budget of £2.7m is spent on books, scientific and technical reports, theses and back runs of journals which are published in 35mm microfilm or on microfiche. The bulk of the division's collection of 157,000 serial titles and 4.5 million hooks and reports is however held as hard copy for ease of shelving, speed of retrieval and the convenience of users. Only in cases where price in relation to use makes the acquisition of hard copies prohibitively expensive is microform the preferred option.

Many libraries, including the British Library's Reference Division have turned to microform in an attempt to conserve their collections. However, until more backsets of serials and out-of-print books are

available from microform publishers the cost of conservation by filming will remain unacceptably high for those libraries. Including the lending division, with limited conservation budgets. Before long however, it is likely that this technique will be overtaken by new technology, but whether optical video-disc recording, for instance, will eventually prove to be a cheaper as well as a more efficient medium remains to be seen.

The bulk of the microform material collected by the division is either 35mm roll microfilm or 145mm x 105mm microfiche produced to the NMA standard of seven rows of 14 frames at a reduction of 24x. Because of the relative ease with which enlargements can be made the division has generally preferred to purchase negative microfilm. Either diode-based or silver film is acquired depending on the cost. The latter is preferred because of its archival qualities.

The collection of microforms currently numbers almost three million items most of which have been published as part of large series by a few major producers. The majority are research and development reports issued by US Government agencies such as the Department of Energy, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Educational Resources Information Centre and the National Technical Information Service.

All these organizations have been distributing their reports in microform since the 1960s and the division has developed a comprehensive collection. Also from the United States comes a vast amount of film containing their entire output of doctoral

theses. Since 1978 however, items have been acquired only in response to demand. Another major series being acquired from America is the Congressional Information Service while from outside Europe the publications of the Food and Agricultural Organization swell the collection by 6,000 per annum.

In addition to ongoing series the library has been spending up to £50,000 per annum acquiring the one-off research collections published by such organizations as Chadwyck Healey, World Microfilms and Research Publications. They include such items as Sotheby & Co catalogues of sales 1734-1945; BBC Home Service nine o'clock news 1939-1945; the Papers of William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland; and French Revolutionary materials: the Molecule Collection, University of Pennsylvania.

A full list of the collections is given in *Microform Research Collections at the British Library Lending Division* available from the division's publications section. The Reference Division of the British Library also collects material of this kind and care is taken to ensure that unnecessary duplication does not occur and that items collected by one division may be made available through the services of the other.

Almost 1,000 square metres of storage space at BLDL are devoted to microforms. Specially designed cabinets contain drawers which hold either 66 boxes of roll film or four rows of microfiche. The main advantage of interchangeability is that series can be stored in their correct alphabetical sequence without regard to format. This speeds up the combination of mobile cabinets and



Rows of storage racks maximize space

any material held as either microfilm or microfiche. Rank-Xerox Copyflo machines (providing paper copy from film at 20 per minute), an AM Bruning 1630 step-and-repeat microfiche enlarger and standard reader printers are used to make enlargements, while an AM Bruning OP 40 (capable of providing 800 copies per hour) and a GAF 16/35 film copier are used to produce film/fiche duplicates.

Unless users specify otherwise, all requests for materials held in film or microfiche form are supplied as such. An increasing number of users are happy with such on arrangement and this reflects the fact that paper copies are expensive to produce and that more and more organizations are equipped with microfilm readers and reader-printers. Microfiche readers have improved greatly in quality over

the 35mm film is held at Boston Spa and is copied on demand. Details of the theses are given in the library's monthly publication *British Reports, Translations and Theses*.

The division is also a publisher of microfilm. Utilizing the ability of computers to produce miniaturized film output, details of the library's serial holdings and conference proceedings - have been issued as COM. The former is known as KIST (Keyword Index to Serial Titles) and is updated at quarterly intervals while the index of conference proceedings covers the period 1954-81 and contains records of 148,000 conferences.

The BLDL is "into" microfilm in a reasonably big way. Whether microfilm will continue to play an important role in the future will depend on the speed with which video disc and the electronic journal are developed. "The microfilm may ensure that the habit of micropublishing, prominent in the 1960s, will never actually die."

D. N. Wood

The author is head of collection of the British Library Lending Division.

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Tony Hendley

The author is head of information services at the National Reprographic Centre for Documentation.

microfilm

Evolution in the library

Microform now has an established role in the university library although neither to the extent expected by early enthusiasts nor in quite the ways that many have envisaged. Available information shows that spending by university libraries on microform is a tiny fraction of their total costs but it is difficult to imagine the operation of even the smallest library without regular recourse to microform.

Forty years ago, the "microform revolution" was being confidently predicted - the library would be contained in a filing cabinet and the book would be obsolete. This prediction has been fairly regularly repeated throughout the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s by one or another of the many enthusiasts for the medium. It is now clear that the technology that could realize the prophesies is available. It is still tantalizingly easy to become excited - or alarmed - at the potential of microform.

However, the academic is still absolutely dependent on the printed word in the way he records, retrieves and uses information - and achieves his status by it. There will have to be a fairly precise combination of circumstances before the revolution is likely to take place. So far we are experiencing an evolution rather than a revolution in the use of microform. Its qualities have been exploited to solve specific problems rather than create a total systems package for a complete library service.

From the 1930s and for the next two decades the use of microform was mainly confined to libraries and for archival purposes. The word "microform" covered it all - reels of 35mm film and cumbersome readers that had to be used in dim surroundings. The alternative was microcard which was even more unsatisfactory in use. Real developments in the microform world occurred outside the library with the introduction of 16mm systems for office use - a complete package of camera, reader and indexing and retrieval of documents.

Another development was the aperture card - a punched card carrying a frame or more of microfilm that could be retrieved by electronic sorting. Together with the use of 16mm film, the introduction of jack-knives converting film to microfiche permitted the updating of microfilm records thus allowing microfilm to be used in dynamic rather than static situations.

And then came the one development that brought microform back to the system context - the replacement of computer output on paper by Computer Output on Microform (COM) in either fiche or film format. Immediately an end product for the automation of library catalogues was available and the concept of those catalogues was freed from the confines of the card cabinet and the full potentials of automation could be exploited.

The automation of library catalogues is now a normal practice, as is their production in physical form on microfiche. A comparative study of catalogue was conducted at Bath in the 1970s and provided good evidence of the superiority of microfilm in almost every way - cost, ease of use and general convenience. The simplicity of the microfiche format was preferred to the film reel with its indexing problems (and greater cost of readers).

Fears for the loss of fiche have proved unfounded, although a daily inspection is required to maintain their correct order. One immediate advantage was the possibility of providing copies of the catalogue inside and outside the library. This introduced microfiche readers to public access in a much freer way. Because it is possible to obtain microfiche readers with dual lens capability both the needs of COM at x42 or x48 magnifications and of ordinary fiche at about 24 magnifications can be accommodated.

Bibliographic reference works eg *British Books in Print* now appear in microfiche helping to convert the librarian to a less grudging acceptance of the medium. By forcing the user to accept the medium, the library has been able to reinforce its position as a standard feature of the university library.

on microfilm or fiche with automated retrieval could be one of the promises of technology to libraries for the future. Once again it would appear that this will depend on initiative from outside the library world.

From the point of view of the university library's main holdings the resistance of the user has been understandably marked. In its first presentation the medium was seen as a solution to the problems set by the rapid expansion of both information and universities and the main emphasis was on its space-saving qualities. In the event the space problem rarely proved to be that relevant and the promise was generally treated with apathy or even as a threat to the librarian's concepts as a curator of knowledge in printed form.

Microform saves space in storage of course, but if the information contained therein is required frequently by more than one person, then the problems of access and reading take back all the space that has been saved to quite a large extent. Furthermore the scholar's need to browse the libraries of most universities or two, but how one would satisfy the 2,000 customers a day that even the small university library's experience is beyond imagination.

This is probably the reason why ultra-fiche which reduced by 192 times failed to make any great mark in libraries - so the Bible can be produced on a 2" square piece of film - so what? Again the early microcard editions of Parliamentary Papers and other similar reference collections were a standard feature of the university library.



the view that the printed page was to be preferred wherever possible. Certainly, publishers of conventional material had the same obscure view of the possibilities of microform. The threatened financial crises of the 1970s did lead to an exploration of alternative publication in microform of some journals but here the conditions of sale and price were such as to eliminate its possible cost advantage. The microform edition cost the same as the hard copy and in some cases, could only be purchased with the hard copy. The resultant lack of interest was viewed as confirmation of the undesirability of microfilm.

The Atkinson report relating to the university library's future, with an immense emphasis on reducing the cost and space advantages favour the microform but the question of copyright and the cost and control of the provision of hard-copy prints are still formidable features. The opportunities for making copies of fugitive material such as reports and theses are well accepted but, at the end of the chain, the user will have had a hard copy made as quick-

ly and as often as possible.

This extends to the production of microfilm copies of research reports whose limited hard-copy editions are often exhausted. Over limited periods we have had encouraging results in a few special areas: the production of microfiche collection of trade catalogues of specific articles relating to specific functions of foreign institutions; a microfiche collection of early horticultural catalogues; study packs of lecture notes and related references (this somehow diad along with other attempts to introduce educational technology to university teaching).

We have twice handed to final year engineering students the project of designing a cheap, easy-to-use anywhere microfiche reader the lack of which is the greatest barrier to any form of real respectability being attained by microform in the scholastic world. There are some models that pass for portable readers but nothing equivalent to the pocket calculator or cheap cassette player yet exists.

Microform is now a common feature of large office systems; the car service engineer turns to a microfiche reader to determine the part required; the maintenance engineer for the photocopying machine brings his manual with him in microfiche form. Careers offices, and travel agencies turn naturally to a microfiche reader in their daily operations. The microfilm industry is well-founded and the associated technology is already proven. Standards are well established; an independent research and advisory body exists.

It is doubtful if all of this would make too significant a difference to the library use of microform if our past experience is any guide.

J. H. Lambie

The author is librarian at the University of Bath.

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FACULTY OF APPLIED STUDIES: Department of Technical Education

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UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI

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Overseas continued

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Leave and medical benefits will be provided. A staff member will contribute 23% of his salary to a maximum of S\$500 to a Central Provident Fund and the University will contribute 22% per month; the sum standing to the staff member's credit in the Fund may be withdrawn when he leaves Singapore/Malaysia permanently. Passage assistance will be provided for candidates appointed at Research Fellow level. Candidates should write to: The Director, Personnel Department, National University of Singapore, Kent Ridge, Singapore 0511, Republic of Singapore, giving their curriculum vitae and also the names and addresses of three referees.

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Research & Studentships continued

**The University of Leeds
Department of Physics
SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING
RESEARCH COUNCIL CASE STUDENTSHIP ON CHARACTERISATION OF POLYMER FILMS**

Applications are invited for a post of Research Assistant to work on a project in the area of polymer films. The successful candidate will be responsible for the supervision of students on the project and for the development of the project. The successful candidate will also be responsible for the supervision of students on the project. The successful candidate will also be responsible for the supervision of students on the project.

**University of London
Postgraduate Research Fellowships**

Applications are invited for a post of Postgraduate Research Fellow to work on a project in the area of research. The successful candidate will be responsible for the supervision of students on the project and for the development of the project. The successful candidate will also be responsible for the supervision of students on the project. The successful candidate will also be responsible for the supervision of students on the project.

Fellowships

**University of Oxford
Penrose College
JUNIOR RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP**

The College proposes to appoint a Junior Research Fellow to work on a project in the area of research. The successful candidate will be responsible for the supervision of students on the project and for the development of the project. The successful candidate will also be responsible for the supervision of students on the project. The successful candidate will also be responsible for the supervision of students on the project.

University of Warwick POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP PHYSICS

The work in the Department of Physics at Warwick is concerned with the study of the properties of materials and the development of new materials. The work is carried out in the areas of condensed matter physics, materials science, and the development of new materials.

The successful candidate will be responsible for the supervision of students on the project and for the development of the project. The successful candidate will also be responsible for the supervision of students on the project. The successful candidate will also be responsible for the supervision of students on the project.

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12 Feature to commemorate the 13th Commonwealth Universities Congress at Birmingham (14-20 Aug.)

Sept

Don's diary

Monday

Spend the morning in my study at home. The theory of my activities this term is that I use the unpaid 70 per cent of my time to complete the final chapter of my long-running study of the European partition of West Africa; that should neatly celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the first volume. In practice half the morning is spent in preparing this afternoon's senior honours class: two new articles and one good book have to be assimilated into last year's notes.

Drive into Aberdeen after an early lunch, and take an extended seminar with those six lively students. Poor employment prospects are not making our students any less rewarding to teach. A stays behind to discuss the possibility of postgraduate research. Five years ago I would certainly have encouraged him; now, for his wife's sake, I begin by trying to put him off. But since A is a mature student of considerable intellectual curiosity this is not easy; and my heart is hardly in the task.

Tuesday

reading up recent work on Kenya, which normally falls to B in our

research student just returned from two months' field work in Ghana. I can warmly commend his initiative and resilience - the problems of studying in that country at present make our little local difficulties seem trivial. C lost a stone and a half during his visit; it was often difficult to find food and the running down of transport led him to walk many miles daily to the archives. Things are, I know, little better for full-time Ghanaian academics.

Lunchtime meeting of the African Studies Group committee; we are planning a symposium for 1984 on "Africa and the sea". The group remains lively because colleagues in several departments value its interdisciplinary operations, and are prepared to put effort into making them work. Since we've never demanded much university money there has been little to cry. We have to plan a symposium on shore-fishing, but quite a lot of weight. Today four of our members had found time since working papers, and we can see the value of a useful meeting not too far from home. The evening is spent planning something new in research.

Wednesday

A day at home in the study. That chapter makes a little progress at last, though there are also essays to review. I am happy to send apologies to the departmental meeting where colleagues are discussing the future syllabus; this may be a less constructive gathering than yesterday's.

Thursday

Arrive in the department to find a ballot form; it seems the meeting could not raise a quorum to decide on some modest changes. My fellow 30-per-center D did attend, and we discuss whether we ought to abstain on proposals we shall not be here to implement. We feel that a modest and constructive programme to which some have addressed much careful thought is being obstructed by short-sightedness and timidity: some colleagues, paralysed by the damage which the University Grants Committee has done, seem in danger of compounding it. Although there seems to be some feeling that D and I should voluntarily give up our votes as well as our careers, we feel arrogant enough to cast them in favour of change.

Some telephone conversations about our hopes of preparing a full-scale history of the university by 1995; there will only be one more quinquennial in the UK during the next three centuries and it would be a shame to waste the opportunity. Then contribute to the "positive vetting" of E, a former student rising in the Civil Service. As the interview lasted about two minutes I do not feel confident that this procedure would always reveal subversive intent - although E certainly has none.

Another two hour class on modern Africa after lunch - then drive to Friday

Today I've been asked to lecture on "The African Revolution". Two men and 40 women, mostly between 25 and 40, whose critical powers have not been dulled by a stay for 40 minutes after the lecture. I am always a welcome lecturer when they appear in our university. My first, says unemployment has increased applications for the liberal studies course which Newbattle offers mature entrants; I hope the universities will find places for those who decide to continue, even if this means that a few worthy school-leavers have longer to wait.

After lunch, F shows me the grounds. I knew the splendour of the house, but had not realized how much else of interest and beauty was included in Lord Lothian's gift to the nation: a play that more people can share; the medieval abbey walls (now being restored through the Manpower Services Commission) out there to be used to keep the public in discipline; the old stables, now thought, make of this arts centre, which student and local communities could share, a useful meeting place for the arts and the sciences. The evening is spent planning something new in research.

Dinner with G, an Edinburgh colleague and old friend. He confirms my impression that financial cuts less savagely than Aberdeen's can have and on the capacity for creative innovation within great universities: it would be nice to think that the leagues could use our part-time contracts as a launching pad, rather than as very temporary cushions.

John D. Hargreaves

The author is professor of history at Aberdeen University. After taking early retirement he returned to teach part-time.

Learning to account for our actions



Tessa Blackstone

Accountability has become a fashionable concept. How to create a more accountable education system has been much debated. How to make the professions more accountable has been extensively discussed. Higher education has not, however, featured very prominently in such discussions and little has been said about academics when the professions are being considered in this context. It is perhaps time then to reflect a little about the question of making university and polytechnic teachers accountable.

Teachers in higher education have a great deal of freedom and autonomy relative to many other comparable occupational groups. If they want to lie in bed all morning and work in the middle of the night instead there is little to prevent them from doing so, although belonging myself to the lark as opposed to owl class I have never been able to understand why anyone should prefer the electric light to the light of day. If they want to take a day off midweek to go fishing or visit a niggling parlour and make it up by working all the weekend instead, their teaching timetables will in most cases allow this.

What they actually teach is also subject to remarkably little control. For years one university teacher I know taught a whole course entirely based on the research he did for his PhD even though it certainly did not remotely cover the prescribed syllabus. Students complained from time to time, but since he was a thick-skinned fellow he shrugged them off. His peers either did not know or did not care and his head of department, having mentioned the complaints, seemed incapable of exerting the necessary pressure to get him to change.

I hasten to add that this kind of behaviour is not typical. Most university teachers are reasonably responsible about their teaching commitments. However when they are not, the mechanisms for dealing with them are not very effective. Moreover, people need to be brought to account for their failures but also to be encouraged and expand on the successful. As other words, the profits as well as the losses need examining.

One of the barriers to promoting greater accountability is the tenacity with which academic staff cling to the concept of academic autonomy. But just how legitimate is some of the current forms of academic autonomy? When large sums of public money are involved is it legitimate to

responsibility to them of education, are becoming more and more important. Excellent arguments are presented for the arts both as rigorous, accountable, academic disciplines and as vehicles for greater community involvement in artistic activity at a variety of levels. In particular, art and design is described as promoting the arts in the community but also meeting the country's technological developments.

It is easy to attract the wrath of the authors of a report by selecting the worst of the remainder. The Arts and Design Education report is no exception. It is a pity that more people can share; the medieval abbey walls (now being restored through the Manpower Services Commission) out there to be used to keep the public in discipline; the old stables, now thought, make of this arts centre, which student and local communities could share, a useful meeting place for the arts and the sciences. The evening is spent planning something new in research.

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John D. Hargreaves

different kinds of institutions. Whereas it is possible for this kind of exercise to take place at the whole school level it makes more sense in the large and much more diffuse higher education institutions to undertake self-evaluation at the departmental level.

What this kind of approach basically means is greater accountability to colleagues and students. It entails the regular collection of feedback from students about the quality of the teaching they are receiving. So far I have confined my comments to teaching, but other activities should be covered including research, consultancy and administrative tasks. Their evaluation would require a system of peer review in which the individual academic would have to be willing to provide an account of his or her activities, say on an annual basis, for collective discussion with colleagues.

The academic role can often be somewhat innately isolated. One of the spin-offs from departmental self-evaluation would be greater collective responsibility for what the department provides with more sharing of ideas about both teaching and research. It would involve the collective rather than the individual setting of standards. Its purpose should be not to catch out the rogues but to provide a system of mutual support and criticism, which enables the individual to build on strengths and to correct weaknesses.

Sometimes advice might be sought from appropriate people outside the department, for example on a highly specialized course where only one person inside has the knowledge to evaluate it and that person gives the course. Some may argue that this already happens. Of course it does but it does not happen in a regular and systematic way throughout the higher education system.

In fact I have sometimes been struck by the close-fisted and even secretive approach some academics have to both their research and teaching that makes Whitehall seem open. One ex-colleague of mine could not bear the thought that his work might be seen by others. As if he had been asked to give up his job.

More self-regulation in higher education is in fact the best protection against threats to institutional autonomy from the outside. It will not guarantee the system against such threats but it will at least make it easier to demonstrate that there are genuine efforts to be responsive and accountable to the system's most important clients: its students.

It is because they have been praised that they may be remembered and quoted as norms.

Even worse is the statement that in recent years there has been a disproportionate growth in the number of students for fine art as compared with design or craft courses. This is absolutely untrue. If the authors had taken the trouble to analyse the data they would discover that fine art is the only art and design area in which between 1977 and 1981 there has been no increase in the number of courses available; that fine art shows the smallest growth in first year enrolments; that as a percentage for all art and design students fine art has declined from 35 to 29; and that as a percentage of all CNAA students the decline is from 4.6 to 3.7.

While recognizing that there must be changes, that art and design must face the cuts issue alongside other disciplines, it is ill-advised to make a mistake of such enormity as to recommend that the art and design departments be closed down. It is not at all bad. At least it is possible to agree that there is a danger of the importance of art and design education in a modern society. If only the case were put better.

Michael Yeomans

The author is president elect of the National Society for Art Education. The Arts and Design Education report is no exception. It is a pity that more people can share; the medieval abbey walls (now being restored through the Manpower Services Commission) out there to be used to keep the public in discipline; the old stables, now thought, make of this arts centre, which student and local communities could share, a useful meeting place for the arts and the sciences. The evening is spent planning something new in research.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Human applications of information technology

Sir, - The University Grants Committee and Science and Engineering Research Council have invited universities to bid for funding and studentships in information technology. Priority in respect of the bids are to be given to the four areas of Advanced Information Technology identified by the Alvey committee, set up by the Minister of Information Technology to advise him on the scope for a collaborative research programme in information technology. The Alvey committee defined its brief as being concerned only with scientific and technical developments and excluded from consideration applications for information technology (to manufacturing processes, for example), and problems of the introduction of such technology.

Yet, in practice, it is the problems of application and the problems of human reaction to such technology changes which are the most important. The Alvey committee itself reports on the Japanese programme of research which it sees as "a major competitive threat" in the following terms:

"... A major objective of the Japanese programme is to apply information technology to those areas of society where increases in efficiency and productivity are most beneficial. These are largely areas in which existing information technology has not been successful."

The Alvey report then proceeded to ignore such topics, but concentrated on the analysis of the crucial

areas of technological advance. The UGC and SERC, presumably following the Alvey report so precisely, almost excluding from consideration these very topics which are seen as such a major threat. It is to be another area where Britain's pure research is to lead the world, while Britain's failure to apply existing technology reduces our manufacturing base still further? Will the yet again for its failure to deal with practical issues rather than pure research?

Yours faithfully,
KENNETH HILTON,
Professor of Financial Control,
University of Southampton.

Data gold mine

Sir, - Your article on the Special Science Research Council Data Archive (THES February 4) described the excellent work by archive staff with the data from the 1981 Census of Population. It is, however, also worth mentioning an even more fundamental role played by academics in relation to this.

Data in computer form are useless without suitable computer programs. The Local Authorities Management Services and Computer Committee (LAMSCA) realized that this is particularly true so far as the 300 million numbers produced from the Census are concerned. LAMSCA sponsored a project at the universities of Durham and Edinburgh, with specialist help on certain topics from the University of Salford and from other academics; the result is easy to use, is arguably the most portable large word package anywhere in the world.

Yours faithfully,
KEN BURGIN
21 The Hawthorns,
Whitehall Road,
Woodford Green
Essex.

Sir, - Professor Halsey's final article on the British intelligentsia (THES, January 28) makes many good points and deserves wide reading. However, he is in a class of his own in thinking that Mendel's results "lay in a social vacuum for a century". His seminal paper was read in 1865, published in 1866, and recognized independently in 1900 by de Vries, Correns and Tschermak.

Yours sincerely,
J. A. BEARDMORE,
University College of Swansea.

Age concern

Sir, - The emphasis on lucrative retirement, voluntary but not involuntary, for the tenured university teacher, and on "new blood" posts for the young postgraduate have overstated many problems of the would-be career researcher. Perhaps fewer than 5,000 teachers have left the universities in comfortable circumstances (being less than 10 per cent of all retired staff). If individual local figures are representative, then over the last two years which cover the period of restructuring of university staff, as many as 5,000 research staff (representing about 50 per cent of all such staff) have left in rather less comfortable circumstances; generally they have not been replaced, nor have they found further jobs in research, not even part-time.

But this is as nothing compared to the insolence of the University Grants Committee, the universities and the Association of University Teachers (THES, January 28). What is at issue is age 35 and researchers? It is employment, where as specifically denied: for women, ethnic minorities or homosexuals there would be public clamour. It is high time the age 35 limit was challenged. To the courts if necessary.

Yours faithfully,
DR J. P. DICKINSON,
Chairman,
Association of Researchers in Medicine and Science Ltd.
2, Holm View,
Leeds.

Letters for publication should arrive by Tuesday morning. They should be as short as possible and written on one side of the paper. The editor reserves the right to cut or amend them if necessary.

British linguistics

Sir, - Dr Andrew Spencer feels that serious consideration of Terence Moore and Christine Carling's telling article on the hopelessness of the Chomskyan paradigm is "a sad reflection on the Atlantic, their message to us: to some as a welcome and all too rare show of independent thinking. If there is anything at all sad in British linguistics, it is the recent propensity for relatively uncritical importation of MIT pseudoscience to the disparagement of the promising native British tradition. Chomsky's supporters like to claim that their theoretical orientation has effected a revolution in linguistics. Though this assessment is of doubtful validity in the sense intended, if revolution is characterized by transfer of power and silencing of opposition, they are not wrong. Here in the United States, the well trained new PhD who does not toe the party line is likely to find himself jobless; in Britain, Moore and Carling's searching critique of the doctrine and methodology of the presumed revolution is characterized, in whole or in part, as "arrant nonsense" (Dr Andrew Spencer, THES, December 24), "merely the expressions of negative emotions" (M. B. Brody, THES, December 24), "laughable if it were not insulting" (N. Smith, THES, December 31). Both tactics, in effect, if not in intention, are attempts to quell pointed criticism of the doctrine from within, the one through ostracism, the other through ridicule.

If linguistics in Britain is not to fall to the same illiberality which has threatened the integrity of objective inquiry in America since the mid-1960s, critiques such as Moore and Carling's - and the potential responses to them - must be taken very seriously indeed.

Sincerely,
THOMAS D. CRAVENS,
Department of Spanish,
Italian and Portuguese,
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences,
University of Illinois.

Yours sincerely,
DR T. J. PITCHER,
Lecturer in Zoology,
University College of North Wales.

Natfhe and police training

Sir, - I should like to clear up some possible misinterpretations of the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education's position on problems concerning Hendon Police cadet College and police training.

Your report (THES, February 4) suggests that Natfhe may have to compromise its anti-racist stance by "protecting its interests as well as those of Mr Fernandez" (the lecturer excluded from Hendon Police College after leaking cadet essays to a television programme).

There is no question of this association compromising its anti-racist stance. We have been one of the most outspoken unions in combatting racism and have devoted much effort to the development of anti-racist and multi-cultural policies. We have no need to be defensive: our policies and actions speak for themselves. Natfhe believes that combatting racism in the police, as elsewhere in society, are crucial issues. We support the recommendations of the Scarman report on the latter and have set up a national group to look into police training and make recommendations. This group will also obviously be considering proposals currently before the Police Training Council.

Despite the association's well-known position and actions on racism, at no time prior to the televising of extracts from police essays concerning racist comments did any member of the Cadet College or from the Kibbura Polytechnic raise their concerns with the association nationally. Had they done so, we would have used the many channels open to us.

Natfhe believes that the complex issues of racism in the police and the development of appropriate police training must be tackled positively and in a broad way. These issues cannot be approached adequately through sensational media coverage relating to one college. Furthermore the withdrawal of civilian staff from a police college, as 'Brent local authority' is threatening in respect of Hendon, is hardly the kind of action likely to aid progress on these matters.

Yours faithfully,
PETER DAWSON,
General Secretary,
National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education.

Ulster standards

Sir, - At the end of 1982, the Government was asked by concerned academics to safeguard the careers of those holding Coleraine degrees who were perturbed by the enforced merger of the New University of Ulster with the Ulster Polytechnic. I am pleased to report that Mr Nicholas Scott, parliamentary under secretary of state for Northern Ireland, has replied: "I am happy to be able to say that there is no reason at all for you to be concerned about the reputation of the academic standards at NUU. There was no suggestion that awards already given by NUU were in any way devalued or of less standing than those of other universities."

The original signatories to the request were 21 external examiners, former staff and students of one school at Coleraine (Biological and Environmental Sciences), but, judging from my international postbag, similar concern and support for Coleraine has been widely felt in other disciplines.

All will now welcome Mr Scott's statement which I trust will be firm and unequivocally reiterated by the Swinerton-Dyer committee in charge of the merger. It is to be hoped that academic standards in the new merged institution will be as high.

Yours sincerely,
DR T. J. PITCHER,
Lecturer in Zoology,
University College of North Wales.

Union View

How sacred are facts and figures?

One evening recently I suffered a pleasant shock: that of being able to help my son with his homework. The context was an English interpretation and the precise subject was the phrase "holy cow". The literal and metaphorical meanings were discussed and he seemed to understand. The holy cows I have in mind are of the breed which afflict the pastures of many of us involved in union affairs.

The first holy cow - perhaps the leader of the herd - to which I turn might be termed the "holy cow" I refer to the economic cake which can only have so many slices. In the educational world, this high-powered sophisticated image is converted into the facile but pervasive belief that educational provision is derived primarily from matters of resources, money, numbers: that it is some sort of ledger-keeping accounting, some simple arithmetical process.

The Scottish Education Department annually produces its projections for student teacher intake numbers required in the Scottish colleges of education. In that yearly calculation the projected number of children is divided by the pupil/teacher ratio to give the required number of teachers. Certain percentile assumptions about fertility rates, retardation rates, non-course-completion among students are then mechanically chewed over to yield what are deemed to be "finely tuned" numbers of new entrants to colleges.

Yet we are expected not only to accept but to believe in the mystery

garet - or at least from her chief cowboy, Norman. The first being that "moderate" trade unions are in the national interest. The second that trade unions should concern themselves only with the earnings and conditions of their members and stay out of politics.

In the first instance, we have to consider the use of the term "moderate". (Is use here akin to saying of someone that he or she "lacks judgement"? That usually in fact means he or she disagrees with my judgment.) I once worked in a college which was threatened with closure. The campaign to oppose the closure was based on notions of dignity, moderation, rationality. That campaign has been held up as a model of trade union action - by Conservative MPs. The college has now closed.

On the second instance, much of the immediately preceding viewpoint pertains. Furthermore, politicians afflict the earnings and conditions of trade union members - none more so than in education. If politics is an influencing factor on these matters - and it is - then trade unionists would be foolish and culpable to pay any heed to that lowing and bellowing.

My final bovine example is of a different hue to the last pair. It is that of the sanctity of "free collective bargaining". What's free about it? The management spokesman of the Scottish Joint National Council (Further Education), replying to the tabled salaries claim for 1983, pointed out that irrespective of inflation and average earnings increases 3 1/2 per cent was all that Government had allowed for salary increases in the rate support grant to local authorities and in cash limits to colleges in the direct sectors.

What's collective about it when the decision maker is not even present? Holy cows are to be held in awe by the naive and the uninitiated. They may even be useful in frightening children. They have no reasonable place in the stock of trade union.

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